THE OUTLINE OF KNOWLEDGE

EDITED BY

JAMES A. RICHARDS

DRAMA

VOLUME XVII

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DRAMA

AGAMEMNON

(Aeschylus, the father of Greek tragedy, was born at Eleusis, 525 B.C. At an early age he began writing for the theatre, producing about seventy dramas of which only about seven survive. Among these are, "The Suppliants," "Seven Against Thebes," and "Agamemnon." Aeschylus was not only a writer but he also fought in the Grecian wars against Persia, being present at the famous battle of Marathon, Salamis, Artemisium, and Platæa. Being the greatest of Greek tragic poets, he differed from his rival Sophocles in that his plays deal with larger issues of fate, and his grandeur of conception. Tradition tells that he was warned he would meet death by a fall of a house and retiring to the fields he was killed by an eagle letting a tortoise fall on his bald head, 456 B.C.)

A LYRICO-DRAMATIC SPECTACLE

"Οι Τρώων μεν ὑπεξέφυγον στονόεσσαν ἀϋτὴν
Ἐν νόστῳ δ' απόλοντο κακῆς ἰστητι γυναικος."

"Greeks that 'scaped the Trojan war-cry, and the wailing battle-field,
But home returning basely perished by a wicked woman's guile."

HOMER, *Odys.* xi. 383-4.

PERSONS

Watchman.
Chorus of Argive Elders.
Clytemnestra, Wife of Agamemnon.
Herald.
Agamemnon, King of Argos and Mycenæ.
Cassandra, a Trojan Prophetess, Daughter of Priam.
Ægisthus, Son of Thyestes.

Scene—*The Royal Palace in Argos.*

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Of all that rich variety of Epic materials with which the early minstrel-literature of Greece supplied the drama of a future age, there was no more notable cycle among the ancients than that which went by the popular name of Νόστοι, or the *Returns;* comprehending an account of the adventures that befell the various Hellenic heroes of the Trojan war in their return home. To this cycle, in its most general acceptation, the Odyssey itself belongs; though the name of Νόστοι, according to the traditions of the ancient grammarians, is more properly confined to a legendary Epic, composed by an old poet, Agias of Troezene, of which the return of Agamemnon and Menelaus forms the principal subject. Of this Epos the grammarian Proclus gives us the following abstract:—

"Athena raises a strife between Agamemnon and Menelaus concerning their voyage homeward. Agamemnon remains behind, in order to pacify the wrath of Athena; but Diomede and Nestor depart, and return in safety to their own country. After them Menelaus sails, and arrives with five ships in Egypt; the rest of his vessels having been lost in a storm. Meanwhile, Calchas and Leonteus and Polypœtes go to Colophon, and celebrate the funeral obsequies of Tiresias, who had died there. There is then introduced the shade of Achilles appearing to Agamemnon, and warning him of the dangers that he was about to encounter. Then follows a storm as the fleet is passing the Capharean rocks, at the south promontory of Eubœa, on which occasion the Locrian Ajax is destroyed by the wrath of Athena, whom he had offended. Neoptolemus, on the other hand, under the protection of Thetis, makes his way overland through Thrace (where he encounters Ulysses in Maronea), to his native country, and proceeding to the country of the Molossi, is there recognized by his grandfather, the aged Peleus, the father of Achilles. The poem then concludes with an account of the murder of Agamemnon by Ægisthus and Clytemnestra, of the revenge taken on her by Orestes and Pylades, and of the return of Menelaus to Lacedæmon."

The last sentence of this curious notice contains the Epic germ of which the famous trilogy—the Agamemnon, the Choephoræ, and the Eumenides of Æschylus—the three plays contained in the present volume, present the dramatic expansion. The celebrity of the legends with regard to the return of the mighty Atridan arose naturally from

the prominent situation in which he stood as the admiral of the famous thousand-masted fleet; and, besides, the passage from the old Troezenian minstrel just quoted, is sufficiently attested by various passages—some of considerable length—in the Odyssey, which will readily present themselves to the memory of those who are familiar with the productions of the great Ionic Epopœist. In the very opening of that poem, for instance, occur the following remarkable lines:—

"Strange, O strange, that mortal men immortal gods will still be blaming,
Saying that the source of evil lies with us; while they, in sooth,
More than Fate would have infatuate with sharp sorrows pierce themselves!
Thus even now Ægisthus, working sorrow more than Fate would have,
The Atridan's wife hath wedded, and himself returning slain,
Knowing well the steep destruction that awaits him; for ourselves
Sent the sharp-eyed Argus-slayer, Hermes, to proclaim our will,
That nor him he dare to murder, nor his wedded wife to woo.
Thus spoke Hermes well and wisely; but the reckless wit, Ægisthus,
Moved he not; full richly therefore now thy folly's fine thou payest."

And the same subject is reverted to in the Third Book (v. 194), where old Nestor, in Pylos, gives an account to Telemachus, first of his own safe return, and then of the fate of the other Greeks, so far as he knew; and, again, in the Fourth Book (v. 535) where Menelaus is informed of his brother's sad fate (slain "like a bull in a stall") by the old prophetic Proteus, the sea harlequin of the African coast; and, also, in the Eleventh Book (v. 405), where Ulysses, in Hades, hears the sad recital from the injured shade of the royal Atridan himself.

The tragic events by which Agamemnon and his family have acquired such a celebrity in the epic and dramatic annals of Greece, are but the sequel and consummation of a series of similar events commencing with the great ancestor of the family; all which hang together in the chain of popular tradition by the great moral principal so often enunciated in the course of these dramas, that sin has always a tendency to propagate its like, and a root of bitterness once planted in a family, will grow up and branch out luxuriantly, till, in the fulness of time, it bears those bloody blossoms, and fruits of perdition that are its natural product. The guilty ancestor, in the present case, is the well-known Tantalus, the peculiar style of whose punishment in the infernal regions has been stereotyped, for the modern memory, in the shape of one of the most common and most expressive words in the English language. Tantalus, a son of Jove, a native of Sipylos

in Phrygia, and who had been admitted to the table of the gods, thinking it a small matter to know the divine counsels, if he did not, at the same time, gratify his vanity by making a public parade of his knowledge before profane ears, was punished in the pit of Tartarus by those tortures of ever reborn and never gratified desire which every schoolboy knows. His son, Pelops, an exile from his native country, comes with great wealth to Pisa; and having, by stratagem, won, in a chariot race, Hippodamia, the daughter of Oernomaus, king of that place, himself succeeded to the kingdom, and became so famous, according to the legend, as to lend a new name to the southern peninsula of Greece which was the theatre of his exploits. In his career also, however, the traces of blood are not wanting, which soil so darkly the path of his no less famous descendants. Pelops slew Myrtilus, the charioteer by whose aid he had won the race that was the beginning of his greatness; and it was the Fury of this Myrtilus—or "his blood crying to Heaven," as in Christian style we should express it—that, according to one poet (Eurip. Orest. 981), gave rise to the terrible retributions of blood by which the history of the Pelopidan family is marked. Of Pelops, according to the common account, Atreus and Thyestes were the sons. These having murdered their stepbrother, Chrysippus, were obliged to flee for safety to Mycenæ, in Argolis, where, in the course of events, they afterwards established themselves, and became famous for their wealth and for their crimes. The bloody story of these hostile brothers commences with the seduction, by Thyestes, of Aerope, the wife of Atreus; in revenge for which insult, Atreus recalls his banished brother, and, pretending reconciliation, offers that horrid feast of human flesh—the blood of the children to the lips of the father—from which the sun turned away his face in horror. The effect of this deed of blood was to entail, between the two families of Thyestes and Atreus, a hereditary hostility, the fruits of which appeared afterwards in the person of Ægisthus, the son of the former, who is found, in this first play of the trilogy, engaged with Clytemnestra in a treacherous plot to revenge his father's wrongs, by the murder of his uncle's son.

Agamemnon, the son, or, according to a less common account (for which see Schol. ad Iliad II. 249), the grandson of Atreus, being distinguished above the other Hellenic princes for wealth and power, was either by special election appointed, or by that sort of irregular kingship common among half-civilized nations, allowed to conduct the famous expedition against Troy that in early times foreshadowed the conquests of Alexander the Great, and the influence of the Greek language and letters in the East. Such a distant expedition as this, like the crusades in the middle ages, was not only a natural living Epos in itself, but would necessarily give rise to that intense glow of popular sympathy, and that excited state of the popular imagina-

tion, which enable the wandering poets of the people to make the best poetic use of the various dramatic incidents that the realities of a highly potentiated history present. Accordingly we find, in the very outset of the expedition, the fleet, storm-bound in the harbour of Aulis, opposite Eubœa, enabled to pursue its course, under good omens, only by the sacrifice of the fairest daughter of the chief. This event—a sad memorial of the barbarous practice of human sacrifice, even among the polished Greeks—formed the subject of a special play, perhaps a trilogic series of plays, by Æschylus. This performance, however, has been unfortunately lost; and we can only imagine what it may have been by the description in the opening chorus of the present play, and by the beautiful, though certainly far from Æschylean, tragedy of Euripides. For our present purpose, it is sufficient to note that, in the Agamemnon, special reference is made to the sacrifice of Iphigenia, both as an unrighteous deed on the part of the father, for which some retribution was naturally to be expected, and as the origin of a special grudge in the mind of the mother, which she afterwards gratifies by the murder of her husband.

As to that deed of blood itself, and its special adaptation for dramatic purposes, there can be no doubt; as little that Æschylus has used his materials in the present play in a fashion that satisfies the highest demands both of lyric and dramatic poetry, as executed by the first masters of both. The calm majesty and modest dignity of the much-tried monarch; the cool self-possession, and the smooth front of specious politeness that mark the character of the royal murderess: the obstreperous bullying of the cowardly braggart, who does the deed with his heart, not with his hand; the half-wild, half-tender ravings of the horror-haunted Trojan prophetess; these together contain a combination of highly wrought dramatic elements, such as is scarcely excelled even in the all-embracing pages of our own Shakespere. As far removed from common-place are the lyrical —in Æschylus never the secondary—elements of the piece. The sublime outbreak of Cassandra's prophetic horror is, as the case demanded, made to exhibit itself as much under the lyric as in the declamatory form; while the other choral parts, remarkable for length and variety, are marked not only by that mighty power of intense moral feeling which is so peculiarly Æschylean, but by the pictorial beauty and dramatic reality that distinguish the workmanship of a great lyric master from that of the vulgar dealer in inflated sentiment and sonorous sentences.

Watch.—I pray the gods a respite from these toils,
This long year's watch that, dog-like, I have kept,
High on the Atridan's battlements, beholding
The nightly council of the stars, the circling
Of the celestial signs, and those bright regents,
High-swung in ether, that bring mortal men
Summer and winter. Here I watch the torch,
The appointed flame that wings a voice from Troy,
Telling of capture; thus I serve her hopes,
The masculine-minded who is sovereign here,
And when night-wandering shades encompass round
My dew-sprent dreamless couch (for fear doth sit
In slumber's chair, and holds my lids apart),
I chaunt some dolorous ditty, making song,
Sleep's substitute, surgeon my nightly care,
And the misfortunes of this house I weep,
Not now, as erst, by prudent counsels swayed.
Oh! soon may the wished for sign relieve my toils,
Thrice-welcome herald, gleaming through the night!

(*The beacon is seen shining*)

All hail thou cresset of the dark! fair gleam
Of day through midnight shed, all hail! bright father
Of joy and dance, in Argos, hail! all hail!
Hillo! hilloa!
I will go tell the wife of Agamemnon
To shake dull sleep away, and lift high-voiced
The jubilant shout well-omened, to salute
This welcome beacon; if, indeed, old Troy
Hath fallen—as flames this courier torch to tell.
Myself will dance the prelude to this joy.
My master's house hath had a lucky throw,
And thrice six falls to me, thanks to the flame
Soon may he see his home; and soon may I
Carry my dear-loved master's hand in mine!
The rest I whisper not, for on my tongue
Is laid a seal. These walls, if they could speak,
Would say strange things. Myself to those that know
Am free of speech, to whoso knows not dumb. (Exit.

Enter CHORUS *in procession. March time*

Nine years have rolled, the tenth is rolling,
Since the strong Atridan pair,
Menelaus and Agamemnon,
Sceptred kings by Jove's high grace,
With a host of sworn alliance,
With a thousand triremes rare,
With a righteous strong defiance,
Sailed for Troy. From furious breast
Loud they clanged the peal of battle;
Like the cry of vultures wild
O'er the lone paths fitful-wheeling,
With their plumy oarage oaring
Over the nest by the spoiler spoiled,
The nest dispeopled now and bare,
Their long but fruitless care.
But the gods see it: some Apollo,
Pan or Jove, the wrong hath noted,
Heard the sharp and piercing cry
Of the startled birds, shrill-throated
Tenants of the sky;
And the late-chastising Fury
Sent from above to track the spoiler,
Hovers vengeful night.

Thus great Jove, the high protector
Of the hospitable laws,
'Gainst Alexander sends the Atridans,
Harnessed in a woman's cause,
The many-lorded fair.
Toils on toils shall come uncounted,
(Jove hath willed it so);
Limb-outwearying hard endeavour,
Where the strong knees press the dust,
Where the spear-shafts split and shiver,
Trojan and Greek shall know.
But things are as they are: the chain
Of Fate doth bind them; sighs are vain,
Tears, libations, fruitless flow,
To divert from purposed ire
The powers whose altars know no fire.
But we behind that martial train
Inglorious left remain,
Old and frail, and feebly leaning

Strength as of childhood on a staff.
Yea! even as life's first unripe marrow
In the tender bones are we,
From war's harsh service free.
For hoary Eld, life's leaf up-shrunken,
Totters, his three-footed way
Feebly feeling, weak as childhood,
Like a dream that walks by day.
But what is this? what wandering word,
Clytemnestra queen, hath reached thee?
What hast seen? or what hast heard
That from street to street swift flies
Thy word, commanding sacrifice?
All the altars of all the gods
That keep the city, gods supernal,
Gods Olympian, gods infernal,
Gods of the Forum, blaze with gifts;
Right and left the flame mounts high,
Spiring to the sky,
With the gentle soothings cherished
Of the oil that knows no malice,
And the sacred cake that smokes
From the queen's chamber in the palace.
What thou canst and may'st, declare;
Be the healer of the care
That bodes black harm within me; change it
To the bright and hopeful ray,
Which from altar riseth, chasing
From the heart the sateless sorrow
That eats vexed life away.

The CHORUS, *having now arranged themselves into a regular band in the middle of the Orchestra, sing the First* CHORAL HYMN

STROPHE

I'll voice the strain. What though the arm be weak
That once was strong,
The suasive breath of Heaven-sent memories stirs
The old man's breast with song.
My age hath virtue left
To sing what fateful omens strangely beckoned
The twin kings to the fray,
What time to Troy concentuous marched
The embattled Greek array.
Jove's swooping bird, king of all birds, led on

The kings of the fleet with spear and vengeful hand:
By the way-side from shining seats serene,
Close by the palace, on the spear-hand seen,
To eagles flapped the air,
One black, the other silver-tipt behind,
And with keen talons seized a timorous hare,
Whose strength could run no more,
Itself, and the live burden which it bore.
Sing woe and well-a-day! But still
May the good omens shame the ill.

ANTISTROPHE

The wise diviner of the host beheld,
And knew the sign;
The hare-devouring birds with diverse wings
Typed the Atridan pair,
The diverse-minded kings;
And thus the fate he chaunted:—Not in vain
Ye march this march to-day;
Old Troy shall surely fall, but not
Till moons on moons away
Have lingering rolled. Rich stores by labour massed
Clean-sweeping Fate shall plunder. Grant the gods,
While this strong bit for Troy we forge with gladness,
No heavenly might in jealous wrath o'ercast
Our mounting hope with sadness.
For the chaste Artemis a sore grudge nurses
Against the kings; Jove's winged hounds she curses,
The fierce war-birds that tore
The fearful hare, with the young brood it bore.
Sing woe and well-a-day! but still
May the good omens shame the ill.

EPODE

The lion's fresh-dropt younglings, and each whelp
That sucks wild milk, and through the forest roves,
Live not unfriended; them the fair goddess loves,
And lends her ready help.
The vision of the birds shall work its end
In bliss, but dashed not lightly with black bane:
I pray thee, Pæan, may she never send
Contrarious blasts dark-lowering, to detain
The Argive fleet.

Ah! ne'er may she desire to feast her eyes
On an unblest unholy sacrifice,
From festal use abhorrent, mother of strife,
And sundering from her lawful lord the wife.
Stern-purposed waits the child-avenging wrath
About the fore-doomed halls,
Weaving dark wiles, while with sure-memoried sting
Fury to Fury calls.
Thus hymned the seer, the doom, in dubious chaunt
Bliss to the chiefs dark-mingling with the bane,
From the way-haunting birds; and we
Respondent to the strain,
Sing woe and well-a-day! but still
May the good omens shame the ill.

STROPHE I

Jove, or what other name
The god that reigns supreme delights to claim,
Him I invoke; him of all powers that be,
Alone I find,
Who from this bootless load of doubt can free
My labouring mind.

ANTISTROPHE I

Who was so great of yore,
With all-defiant valour brimming o'er,
Is mute; and who came next by a stronger arm
Thrice-vanquished fell;
But thou hymn victor Jove: so in thy heart
His truth shall dwell.

STROPHE II

For Jove doth teach men wisdom, sternly wins
To virtue by the tutoring of their sins;
Yea! drops of torturing recollection chill
The sleeper's heart; 'gainst man's rebellious will
Jove works the wise remorse:
Dread Powers, on awful seats enthroned, compel
Our hearts with gracious force.

ANTISTROPHE II

The elder chief, the leader of the ships,
Heard the dire doom, nor dared to ope his lips
Against the seer, and feared alone to stand
'Gainst buffeting fate, what time the Chalcian strand
Saw the vexed Argive masts
In Aulis tides hoarse-refluent, idly chained
By the fierce Borean blasts;

STROPHE III

Blasts from Strymon adverse braying,
Harbour-vexing, ship-delaying,
Snapping cables, shattering oars,
Wasting time, consuming stores,
With vain-wandering expectation,
And with long-drawn slow vexation
Wasting Argive bloom.
At length the seer forth-clanged the doom,
A remedy strong to sway the breeze,
And direful Artemis to appease,
But to the chiefs severe:
The Atridans with their sceptres struck the ground,
Nor could restrain the tear.

ANTISTROPHE III

Then spake the elder. To deny,
How hard! still harder to comply!
My daughter dear, my joy, my life,
To slay with sacrificial knife,
And with life's purple-gushing tide,
Imbrue a father's hand, beside
The altar of the gods.
This way or that is ill: for how
Shall I despise my federate vow?
How leave the ships? That all conspire
Thus hotly to desire
The virgin's blood—wind-soothing sacrifice—
Is the gods' right. So be it.

STROPHE IV

Thus to necessity's harsh yoke he bared
His patient neck. Unblissful blew the gale
That turned the father's heart

To horrid thoughts unholy, thoughts that dared
The extreme of daring. Sin from its primal spring
Mads the ill-counsell'd heart, and arms the hand
With reckless strength. Thus he
Gave his own daughter's blood, his life, his joy,
To speed a woman's war, and consecrate
His ships for Troy.

ANTISTROPHE IV

In vain with prayers, in vain she beats dull ears
With a father's name; the war-delighting chiefs
Heed not her virgin years.
The father stood; and when the priests had prayed
Take her, he said; in her loose robes enfolden,
Where prone and spent she lies, so lift the maid;
Even as a kid is laid,
So lay her on the altar; with dumb force
Her beauteous mouth gag, lest it breathe a voice
Of curse to Argos.

STROPHE V

And as they led the maid, her saffron robe
Sweeping the ground, with pity-moving dart
She smote each from her eye,
Even as a picture beautiful, fain to speak,
But could not. Well that voice they knew of yore;
Oft at her father's festive board,
With gallant banqueters ringed cheerly round,
The virgin strain they heard
That did so sweetly pour
Her father's praise, whom Heaven had richly crowned
With bounty brimming o'er.

ANTISTROPHE V

The rest I know not, nor will vainly pry;
But Calchas was a seer not wont to lie.
Justice doth wait to teach
Wisdom by suffering. Fate will have its way.
The quickest ear is pricked in vain to-day,
To catch to-morrow's note. What boots
To forecast woe, which, on no wavering wing,
The burden'd hour shall bring.
But we, a chosen band,

Left here sole guardians of the Apian land,
Pray Heaven, all good betide!

Enter CLYTEMNESTRA

Chorus.—Hail Clytemnestra! honour to thy sceptre!
When her lord's throne is vacant, the wife claims
His honor meetly. Queen, if thou hast heard
Good news, or to the hope of good that shall be,
With festal sacrifice dost fill the city,
I fain would know; but nothing grudge thy silence.
Clytem.—Bearing blithe tidings, saith the ancient saw,
Fair Morn be gendered from boon mother Night!
News thou shalt hear beyond thy topmost hope;
The Greeks have ta'en old Priam's city.
Chorus. How!
Troy taken! the word drops from my faithless ear.
Clytem.—The Greeks have taken Troy. Can I speak plainer?
Chorus.—Joy o'er my heart creeps, and provokes the tear.
Clytem.—Thine eye accuses thee that thou art kind.
Chorus.—What warrant of such news? What certain sign?
Clytem.—Both sign and seal, unless some god deceive me.
Chorus.—Dreams sometimes speak; did suasive visions move thee?
Clytem.—Where the soul sleeps, and the sense slumbers, there
Shall the wise ask for reasons?
Chorus. Ever swift
Though wingless, Fame, with tidings fair hath cheered thee.
Clytem.—Thou speak'st as one who mocks a simple girl.
Chorus.—Old Troy is taken? how?—when did it fall?
Clytem.—The self-same night that mothers this to-day.
Chorus.—But how? what stalwart herald ran so fleetly?
Clytem.—Hephæstus. He from Ida shot the spark;
And flaming straightway leapt the courier fire
From height to height; to the Hermæan rock
Of Lemnos, first from Ida; from the isle
The Athóan steep of mighty Jove received
The beaming beacon; thence the forward strength
Of the far-travelling lamp strode gallantly
Athwart the broad sea's back. The flaming pine
Rayed out a golden glory like the sun,
And winged the message of Macistus' watch-tower.
There the wise watchman, guiltless of delay,
Lent to the sleepless courier further speed;
And the Messapian station hailed the torch
Far-beaming o'er the floods of the Euripus.

There the grey health lit the responsive fire,
Speeding the portioned message; waxing strong,
And nothing dulled across Asopus' plain
The flame swift darted like the twinkling moon,
And on Cithæron's rocky heights awaked
A new receiver of the wandering light.
The far-sent ray, by the faithful watch not spurned,
With bright addition journeying, bounded o'er
Gorgópus' lake and Ægiplanctus' mount,
Weaving the chain unbroken. Hence it spread
Not scant in strength, a mighty beard of flame,
Flaring across the headlands that look down
On the Saronic gulf. Speeding its march,
It reached the neighbour-station of our city,
Arachne's rocky steep; and thence the halls
Of the Atridæ recognised the signal,
Light not unfathered by Idæan fire.
Such the bright train of my torch-bearing heralds,
Each from the other fired with happy news,
And last and first was victor in the race
Such the fair tidings that my lord hath sent,
A sign that Troy hath fallen.

Chorus.— And for its fall
Our voice shall hymn the gods anon: meanwhile
I'm fain to drink more wonder from thy words.

Clytem.—This day Troy fell. Methinks I see'st; a host
Of jarring voices stirs the startled city,
Like oil and acid, sounds that will not mingle,
By natural hatred sundered. Thou may'st hear
Shouts of the victor, with the dying groan,
Battling, and captives' cry; upon the dead—
Fathers and mothers, brothers, sisters, wives—
The living fall—the young upon the old;
And from enthralléd necks wail out their woe.
Fresh from the fight, through the dark night the spoilers
Tumultuous rush where hunger spurs them on,
To feast on banquets never spread for them.
The homes of captive Trojan chiefs they share
As chance decides the lodgment; there secure
From the cold night-dews and the biting frosts,
Beneath the lordly roof, to their hearts' content
They live, and through the watchless night prolong
Sound slumbers. Happy if the native gods
They reverence, and the captured altars spare,
Themselves not captive led by their own folly!

May no unbridled lust of unjust gain
Master their hearts, no reckless rash desire!
Much toil yet waits them. Having turned the goal,
The course's other half they must mete out,
Ere home receive them safe. Their ships must brook
The chances of the sea; and, these being scaped,
If they have sinned the gods their own will claim,
And vengeance wakes till blood shall be atoned.
I am a woman; but mark thou well my words;
I hint the harm; but with no wavering scale,
Prevail the good! I thank the gods who gave me
Rich store of blessings, richly to enjoy.

Chorus.—Woman, thou speakest wisely as a man,
And kindly as thyself. But having heard
The certain signs of Agememnon's coming,
Prepare we now to hymn the gods; for surely
With their strong help we have not toiled in vain.

O regal Jove! O blessed Night!
Thou hast won thee rich adornments,
Thou hast spread thy shrouding meshes
O'er the towers of Priam. Ruin
Whelms the young, the old. In vain
Shall they strive to o'erleap the snare,
And snap the bondsman's galling chain,
In woe retrieveless lost.
Jove, I fear thee, just protector
Of the wrong'd host's sacred rights;
Thou didst keep thy bow sure bent
'Gainst Alexander; not before
The fate-predestined hour, and not
Beyond the stars, with idle aim,
Thy cunning shaft was shot.

CHORAL HYMN

STROPHE I

The hand of Jove hath smote them; thou
May'st trace it plainly;
What the god willed, behold it now
Not purposed vainly!
The gods are blind and little caring,
So one hath said, to mark the daring
Of men, whose graceless foot hath ridden
O'er things to human touch forbidden.

Godless who said so; sons shall rue
Their parents' folly,
Who flushed with wealth, with insolence flown,
The sober bliss of man outgrown,
The tramp of Mars unchastened blew,
And stirred red strife without the hue
Of justice wholly.
Live wiselier thou; not waxing gross
With gain, thou shalt be free from loss.
Weak is his tower, with pampering wealth
On brief alliance
Who spurns great Justice' altar dread
With damned defiance;
Him the deep hell shall claim, and shame
His vain reliance.

ANTISTROPHE I

Self-will fell Até's daughter, still
Fore-counselling ruin,
Shall spur him on resistless borne
To his undoing.
Fined with sharp loss beyond repairing,
His mercy like a beacon flaring,
Shall shine to all. Like evil brass,
That tested shows a coarse black mass,
His deep distemper he shall show
By dints of trial.
Even as a boy in wanton sport,
Chasing a bird to his own hurt,
And to the state's redeemless loss,
Whom, when he prays, the gods shall cross
With sheer denial,
And sweep the lewd and lawless liver
From earth's fair memory for ever;
Thus to the Atridans' palace came
False Alexander,
And shared the hospitable board,
A bold offender,
Filching his host's fair wife away
To far Scamander.

STROPHE II

She went, and to the Argive city left
Squadrons shield-bearing,

Battle preparing.
Swords many-flashing
Oars many-plashing;
She went, destruction for her dowry bearing,
To the Sigean shore;
Light with swift foot she brushed the doorstead, daring
A deed undared before.
The prophets of the house loud wailing,
Cried with sorrow unavailing,
"Woe to the Atridans! woe!
The lofty palaces fallen low
The marriage and the marriage bed,
The steps once faithful, fond to follow
There where the faithful husband led!"
He silent stood in sadness, not in wrath,
His own eye scarce believing,
As he followed her flight beyond the path
Of the sea-wave broadly heaving.
And phantoms sway each haunt well known,
Which the lost loved one went to own,
And the statued forms that look from their seats
With a cold smile serenely,
He loathes to look on; in his eye
Pines Aphrodité leanly.

ANTISTROPHE II

In vain he sleeps; for in the fretful night
Shapes of fair seeming
Flit through his dreaming,
Soothing him sweetly,
Leaving him fleetly
Of bliss all barren. The shape fond fancy weaves him
His eager grasp would keep,
In vain; it cheats the hand; and leaves him, sweeping
Swift o'er the paths of sleep.
These sorrows pierce the Atridan chiefs,
And, worse than these, their private griefs.
But general Greece that to the fray
Sent her thousands, mourns to-day;
And Grief stout-hearted at each door
Sits to bear the burden sore
Of dreadful news from the Trojan shore.
Ah! many an Argive heart to-day
Is pricked with wail and mourning,

Knowing how many went to Troy,
From Troy how few returning!
The mothers of each house shall wait
To greet their sons at every gate;
But, alas! not men, but dust of men
Each sorrowing house receiveth,
The urn in which the fleshly case
Its cindered ruin leaveth.

STROPHE III

For Mars doth market bodies, and for gold
Gives dust, and in the battle of the bold
Holds the dread scales of Fate.
Burnt cinders, a light burden, but to friends
A heavy freight,
He sends from Troy; the beautiful vase he sends
With dust, for hearts, well lined, on which descends
The frequent tear.
And friends do wait their praise; this here
Expert to wield the pointed spear,
And this who cast his life away,
Nobly in ignoble fray,
For a strange woman's sake.
And in their silent hearts hate burns;
Against the kings
The moody-muttered grudge creeps forth,
And points its stings.
Others they mourn who 'neath Troy's wall
Entombed, dark sleep prolong,
Low pressed beneath the hostile sod,
The beautiful, the strong!

ANTISTROPHE III

O hard to bear, when evil murmurs fly,
Is a nation's hate; unblest on whom doth lie
A people's curse!
My heart is dark, in my fear-procreant brain
Bad begets worse.
For not from heaven the gods behold in vain
Hands red with slaughter. The black-mantled train
Who watch and wait,
In their own hours shall turn to bane
The bliss that grew from godless gain.

The mighty man with heart elate
Shall fall; even as the sightless shades,
The great man's glory fades.
Sweet to the ear is the popular cheer
Forth billowed loudly;
But the bolt from on high shall blast his eye
That looketh proudly.
Be mine the sober bliss, and far
From fortune's high-strung rapture;
Not capturing others, may I never
See my own city's capture!

EPODE

Swift-winged with thrilling note it came,
The blithe news from the courier-flame;
But whether true and witnessed well,
Or if some god hath forged a lie,
What tongue can tell?
Who is so young, so green of wit,
That his heart should blaze with a fever fit,
At a tale of this fire-courier's telling,
When a new rumour swiftly swelling,
May turn him back to dole? To lift the note
Of clamorous triumph ere the fight be fought,
Is a light chance may fitly fall,
Where women wield the spear
A wandering word by woman's fond faith sped
Swells and increases,
But with dispersion swift a woman's tale
Is lost and ceases.

Enter CLYTEMNESTRA

Soon shall we know if the light-bearing lamps
And the bright signals of the fiery changes
Spake true or, dream-like, have deceived our senses
With smiling semblance. For, behold, there comes,
Beneath the outspread olive's branchy shade,
A herald from the beach; and thirsty dust,
Twin-sister of the clay, attests his speed.
Not voiceless he, nor with the smoking flame
Of mountain pine will bring uncertain news.
His heraldry gives increase to our joy,
Or—but to speak ill-omened words I shun;—
May fair addition fair beginning follow!

Chorus.—Whoso fears evil where no harm appears,
Reap first himself the fruit of his own fears.

Enter HERALD

Hail Argive land! dear fatherland, all hail!
This tenth year's light doth shine on my return!
And now this one heart's hope from countless wrecks
I save! Scarce hoped I e'er to lay my bones
Within the tomb, where dearest dust is stored.
I greet thee, native land! thee, shining sun!
Thee, the land's Sovereign, Jove! thee, Pythian King,
Shooting no more thy swift-winged shafts against us.
Enough on red Scamander's banks we knew
Thee hostile; now our saviour-god be thou,
Apollo, and our healer from much harm!
And you, all gods that guide the chance of fight,
I here invoke; and thee, my high protector,
Loved Hermes, of all heralds most revered.
And you, all heroes that sent forth our hosts,
Bring back, I pray, our remnant with good omens.
O kingly halls! O venerated seats!
O dear-loved roofs, and ye sun-fronting gods,
If ever erst, now on this happy day,
With these bright-beaming eyes, duly receive
Your late returning king; for Agamemnon
Comes, like the sun, a common joy to all.
Greet him with triumph, as beseems the man,
Who with the mattock of justice-bringing Jove
Hath dug the roots of Troy, hath made its altars
Things seen no more, its towering temples razed,
And caused the seed of the whole land to perish.
Such yoke on Ilium's haughty neck the elder
Atridan threw, a king whom gods have blessed
And men revere, 'mongst mortal worthy most
Of honor; now nor Paris, nor in the bond
Partner'd with him, old Troy more crime may boast
Than penalty; duly in the court of fight,
In the just doom of rape and robbery damned,
His pledge is forfeited; his hand hath reaped
Clean bare the harvest of all bliss from Troy.
Doubly they suffer for a double crime.

Chorus.—Hail soldier herald, how farest thou?

Herald.— Right well!
So well that I could bless the gods and die.

Chorus.—Doubtless thy love of country tried thy heart?

Herald.—To see these shores I weep for every joy.
Chorus.—And that soul-sickness sweetly held thee?
Herald.— How?
Instruct my wit to comprehend thy words.
Chorus.—Smitten with love of them that much loved thee.
Herald.—Say'st thou? loved Argos us as we loved Argos?
Chorus.—Ofttimes we sorrowed from a sunless soul.
Herald.—How so? Why should the thought of the host have clouded
Thy soul with sadness?
Chorus.— Sorrow not causeless came;
But I have learned to drug all woes by silence.
Herald.—Whom should'st thou quail before, the chiefs away?
Chorus.—I could have used thy phrase, and wished to die.
Herald.—Die now, an' thou wilt, for joy! The rolling years
Have given all things a prosperous end, though some
Were hard to bear; for who, not being a god,
Can hope to live long years of bliss unbroken?
A weary tale it were to tell the tithe
Of all our hardships; toils by day, by night,
Harsh harbourage, hard hammocks, and scant sleep.
No sun without new troubles, and new groans,
Shone on our voyage; and when at length we landed,
Our woes were doubled; 'neath the hostile walls,
On marshy meads night-sprinkled by the dews,
We slept, our clothes rotted with drenching rain,
And like wild beasts with shaggy-knotted hair.
Why should I tell bird-killing winter's sorrows,
Long months of suffering from Idean snows,
Then summer's scorching heat, when noon beheld
The waveless sea beneath the windless air
In sleep diffused; these toils have run their hour.
The dead care not to rise; their roll our grief
Would muster o'er in vain; and we who live
Vainly shall fret at the cross strokes of fate.
Henceforth to each harsh memory of the past
Farewell! we who survive this long-drawn war
Have gains to count that far outweigh the loss.
Well may we boast in the face of the shining sun,
O'er land and sea our winged tidings wafting.
The Achæan host hath captured Troy; and now
On the high temples of the gods we hang
These spoils, a shining grace, there to remain
An heritage for ever. These things to hear
Shall men rejoice, and with fair praises laud

The state and its great generals, laud the grace
Of Jove the Consummator. I have said.
Chorus.—I own thy speech the conqueror; for a man
Can never be too old to learn good news,
And though thy words touch Clytemnestra most,
Joy to the Atridan's halls is wealth to me.
Clytem.—I lifted first the shout of jubilee,
Then when the midnight sign of the courier fire
Told the deep downfall of the captured Troy;
But one then mocked my faith, that I believed
The fire-sped message in so true a tale.
'Tis a light thing to buoy a woman's heart
With hopeful news, they cried; and with these words
They wildered my weak wit. And yet I sped
The sacrifice, and raised the welcoming shout
In woman's wise, and at a woman's word
Forthwith from street to street uprose to the gods
Well-omened salutations, and glad hymns,
Lulling the fragrant incense-feeding flame.
What needs there more? The event has proved me right,
Himself—my lord—with his own lips shall speak
The weighty tale; myself will go make ready
With well-earned honour to receive the honoured.
What brighter bliss on woman's lot may beam,
Than when a god gives back her spouse from war,
To ope the gates of welcome. Tell my husband,
To his loved home, desired of all, to haste.
A faithful wife, even as he left her, here
He'll find expectant, like a watch-dog, gentle
To him and his, to all that hate him harsh.
The seals that knew his stamp, when hence he sailed,
Unharmed remain, untouched: and for myself
Nor praise nor blame from other man I know,
No more than dyer's art can tincture brass.
Herald.—A boast like this, instinct with very truth,
Comes from a noble lady without blame.
Chorus.—Wise words she spake, and words that need no comment
To ears that understand. But say, good Herald,
Comes Menelaus safe back from the wars,
His kindly sway in Argos to resume?
Herald.—I cannot gloss a lie with fair pretence;
The best told lie bears but a short-lived fruit.
Chorus.—Speak the truth plainly, if thou canst not pleasantly;
These twain be seldom wedded; and here, alas!

They stand out sundered with too clear a mark.
Herald.—The man is vanished from the Achæan host,
He and his vessel. Thou hast heard the truth.
Chorus.—Sailed he from Ilium separate from the fleet?
Or did the tempest part him from his friends!
Herald.—Like a good marksman thou hast hit the mark,
In one short sentence summing many sorrows.
Chorus.—Alive is he or dead? What word hath reached you?
What wandering rumour from sea-faring men?
Herald.—This none can tell, save yon bright sun aloft,
That cherishes all things with his friendly light.
Chorus.—How came the storm on the fleet? or how was ended
The wrath of the gods?
Herald.— Not well it suits to blot.
With black rehearsal this auspicious day.
Far from the honors of the blissful gods
Be grief's recital. When with gloomy visage
An ugly tale the herald's voice unfolds,
At once a general wound, and private grief,
An army lost, the sons of countless houses
Death-doomed by the double scourge so dear to Ares,
A twin-speared harm, a yoke of crimson slaughter:
A herald saddled with such woes may sing
A pæan to the Erinnyes. But I,
Who to this city blithe and prosperous
Brought the fair news of Agamemnon's safety,
How shall I mingle bad with good, rehearsing
The wintry wrath sent by the gods to whelm us?
Fire and the sea, sworn enemies of old,
Made friendly league to sweep the Achæan host
With swift destruction pitiless. Forth rushed
The tyrannous Thracian blasts, and wave chased wave,
Fierce 'neath the starless night, and ship on ship
Struck clashing; beak on butting beak was driven;
The puffing blast, the beat of boiling billows,
The whirling gulph (an evil pilot) wrapt them
In sightless death. And when the shining sun
Shone forth again, we see the Ægean tide
Strewn with the purple blossoms of the dead,
And wrecks of shattered ships. Us and our bark
Some god, no man, the storm-tost hull directing,
Hath rescued scathless, stealing us from the fray,
Or with a prayer begging our life from Fate.
Kind Fortune helmed us further, safely kept
From yeasty ferment in the billowy bay,

Nor dashed on far-ledged rocks. Thus having 'scaped
That ocean hell, scarce trusting our fair fortune,
We hailed the lucid day; but could we hope,
The chance that saved ourselves had saved our friends?
Our fearful hearts with thoughts of them we fed,
Far-labouring o'er the loosely-driving main.
And doubtless they, if yet live breath they breathe,
Deem so of us, as we must fear of them,
That they have perished. But I hope the best.
And first and chief expect ye the return
Of Menelaus. If the sun's blest ray
Yet looks on him, where he beholds the day
By Jove's devising, not yet willing wholly
To uproot the race of Atreus, hope may be
He yet returns. Thou hast my tale; and I
Have told the truth untinctured with a lie. (Exit.

CHORAL HYMN

STROPHE I

Who gave her a name
So true to her fame?
Does a Providence rule in the fate of a word?
Sways there in heaven a viewless power
O'er the chance of the tongue in the naming hour?
Who gave her a name,
This daughter of strife, this daughter of shame,
The spear-wooed maid of Greece?
Helen the taker! 'tis plain to see
A taker of ships, a taker of men,
A taker of cities is she.
From the soft-curtained chamber of Hymen she fled,
By the breath of giant Zephyr sped,
And shield-bearing throngs in marshalled array
Hounded her flight o'er the printless way,
Where the swift-plashing oar
The fair booty bore
To whirling Simois' leafy shore,
And stirred the crimson fray.

ANTISTROPHE I

For the gods sent a bride,
Kin but not kind,
Ripe with the counsel of wrath to Troy,

In the fulness of years, the offender to prove,
And assert the justice of Jove;
For great Jove is lord
Of the rights of the hearth and the festal board.
The sons of Priam sang
A song to the praise of the bride:
From jubilant throats they praised her then,
The bride from Hellas brought;
But now the ancient city hath changed
Her hymn to a doleful note.
She weeps bitter tears; she curses the head
Of the woe-wedded Paris; she curses the bed
Of the beautiful bride
That crossed the flood,
And filched the life of her sons, and washed
Her wide-paved streets with blood.

STROPHE II

Whoso nurseth the cub of a lion
Weaned from the dugs of its dam, where the draught
Of its mountain-milk was free,
Finds it gentle at first and tame.
It frisks with the children in innocent game,
And the old man smiles to see;
It is dandled about like a babe in the arm,
It licketh the hand that fears no harm,
And when hunger pinches its fretful maw,
It fawns with an eager glee.

ANTISTROPHE II

But it grows with the years; and soon reveals
The fount of fierceness whence it came:
And, loathing the food of the tame,
It roams abroad, and feasts in the fold,
On feasts forbidden, and stains the floor
Of the house that nursed it with gore.
A curse they nursed for their own undoing,
A mouth by which their own friends shall perish;
A servant of Até, a priest of Ruin,
Some god hath taught them to cherish.

STROPHE III

Thus to Troy came a bride of the Spartan race,

With a beauty as bland as a windless calm,
Prosperity's gentlest grace;
And mild was love's blossom that rayed from her eye,
The soft-winged dart that with pleasing pain
Thrills heart and brain.
But anon she changed: herself fulfilled
Her wedlock's bitter end;
A fatal sister, a fatal bride,
Her fateful head she rears;
Herself the Erinnys from Jove to avenge
The right of the injured host, and change
The bridal joy to tears.

ANTISTROPHE III

'Twas said of old, and 'tis said to-day,
That wealth to prosperous stature grown
Begets a birth of its own:
That a surfeit of evil by good is prepared,
And sons must bear what allotment of woe
Their sires were spared.
But this I rebel to believe: I know
That impious deeds conspire
To beget an offspring of impious deeds
Too like their ugly sire.
But whoso is just, though his wealth like a river
Flow down, shall be scathless: his house shall rejoice
In an offspring of beauty for ever.

STROPHE IV

The heart of the haughty delights to beget
A haughty heart. From time to time
In children's children recurrent appears
The ancestral crime.
When the dark hour comes that the gods have decreed,
And the Fury burns with wrathful fires,
A demon unholy, with ire unabated,
Lies like black night on the halls of the fated:
And the recreant son plunges guiltily on
To perfect the guilt of his sires.

ANTISTROPHE IV

But Justice shines in a lowly cell;
In the homes of poverty, smoke begrimed,

With the sober-minded she loves to dwell.
But she turns aside
From the rich man's house with averted eye,
The golden-fretted halls of pride
Where hands with lucre are foul, and the praise
Of counterfeit goodness smoothly sways:
And wisely she guides in the strong man's despite
All things to an issue of right.

Chorus.—But, hail the king! the city-taking
Seed of Atreus' race.
How shall I accost thee! How
With beseeming reverence greet thee?
Nor above the mark, nor sinking
Beneath the line of grace?
Many of mortal men there be,
'Gainst the rule of right preferring
Seeming to substance; tears are free
In the eye when woe its tale rehearseth,
But the sting of sorrow pierceth
No man's liver; many force
Lack-laughter faces to relax
Into the soft lines traced by joy.
But the shepherd true and wise
Knows the faithless man, whose eyes,
With a forward friendship twinkling,
Fawns with watery love.
For me, I nothing hide. O King,
In my fancy's picturing,
From the Muses far I deemed thee,
And thy soul not wisely helming
When thou drew'st the knife
For Helen's sake, a woman, whelming
Thousands in ruin, rushing rashly
On unwelcome strife.
But now all's well. No shallow smiles
We wear for thee, thy weary toils
All finished. Thou shalt know anon
What friends do serve thee truly,
And who in thy long absence used
Their stewardship unduly.

Enter AGAMEMNON *with attendants;* CASSANDRA *behind*

Aga.—First Argos hail! and ye, my country's gods,
Who worked my safe return, and nerved my arm

With vengeance against Priam! for the gods,
Taught by no glossing tongue, but by the sight
Of their own eyes knew justice; voting ruin
And men-destroying death to ancient Troy,
Their fatal pebbles in the bloody urn
Not doubtingly they dropt; the other vase,
Unfed with hope of suffrage-bearing hand,
Stood empty. Now the captured city's smoke
Points where it fell. Raves Ruin's storm; the winds
With crumbled dust and dissipated gold
Float grossly laden. To the immortal gods
These thanks, fraught with rich memory of much good,
We pay; they taught our hands to spread the net
With anger-whetted wit; a woman's frailty
Laid bare old Ilium to the Argive bite,
And with the setting Pleiads outleapt a birth
Of strong shield-bearers from the fateful horse.
A fierce flesh-tearing lion leapt their walls,
And licked a surfeit of tyrannic blood.
This prelude to the gods. As for thy words
Of friendly welcome, I return thy greeting,
And as your thought, so mine; for few are gifted
With such rich store of love, to see a friend
Preferred and feel no envy; 'tis a disease
Possessing mortal men, a poison lodged
Close by the heart, eating all joy away
With double barb—his own mischance who suffers
And bliss of others sitting at his gate,
Which when he sees he groans. I know it well;
They who seemed most my friends, and many seemed,
Were but the mirrored show, the shadowy ghost
Of something like to friendship, substanceless.
Ulysses only, most averse to sail,
Was still most ready in the yoke with me
To bear the harness; living now or dead,
This praise I frankly give him. For the rest,
The city and the gods, we will take counsel
In full assembly freely. What is good
We will give heed that it be lasting; where
Disease the cutting or the caustic cure
Demands, we will apply it. I, meanwhile,
My hearth and home salute, and greet the gods,
Who, as they sent me to the distant fray,
Have brought me safely back. Fair victory,
Once mine, may she dwell with me evermore!

Clytem.—Men! Citizens! ye reverend Argive seniors,
No shame feel I, even in your face, to tell
My husband-loving ways. Long converse lends
Boldness to bashfulness. No foreign griefs,
Mine own self-suffered woes I tell. While he
Was camping far at Ilium, I at home
Sat all forlorn, uncherished by the mate
Whom I had chosen; this was woe enough
Without enforcement; but, to try me further,
A host of jarring rumours stormed my doors,
Each fresh recital with a murkier hue
Than its precedent; and I must hear all.
If this my lord, had borne as many wounds
In battle as the bloody fame recounted,
He had been pierced throughout even as a net;
And had he died as oft as Rumour slew him,
He might have boasted of a triple coil
Like the three-bodied Geryon, while on earth
(Of him below I speak not), and like him
Been three times heaped with a cloak of funeral dust.
Thus fretted by cross-gained reports, oft-times
The knotted rope high-swung had held my neck,
But that my friends with forceful aid prevented.
Add that my son, pledge of our mutual vows,
Orestes is not here; nor think it strange.
Thy Phocian spear-guest, the most trusty Strophius,
Took him in charge, a twofold danger urging
First thine beneath the walls of Troy, and further
The evil likelihood that, should the Greeks
Be worsted in the strife, at home the voice
Of many-babbling anarchy might cast
The council down, and as man's baseness is,
At fallen greatness insolently spurn.
Moved by these thoughts I parted with my boy,
And for no other cause. Myself the while
So woe-worn lived, the fountains of my grief
To their last drop were with much weeping drained;
And far into the night my watch I've kept
With weary eyes, while in my lonely room
The night-torch faintly glimmered. In my dream
The buzzing gnat, with its light-brushing wing,
Startled the fretful sleeper; thou hast been
In waking hours, as in sleep's fitful turns
My only thought. But having bravely borne
This weight of woe, now with blithe heart I greet

Thee, my heart's lord, the watch-dog of the fold,
The ship's sure mainstay, pillared shaft whereon
Rests the high roof, fond parent's only child,
Land seen by sailors past all hope, a day
Lovely to look on when the storm hath broken,
And to the thirsty wayfarer the flow
Of gushing rill. O sweet it is, how sweet
To see an end of the harsh yoke that galled us!
These greetings to my lord; nor grudge me, friends,
This breadth of welcome; sorrows we have known
Ample enough. And now, thou precious head,
Come from thy car; nay, do not set thy foot,
The foot that trampled Troy, on common clay.
What ho! ye laggard maids! why lags your task
Behind the hour? Spread purple where he treads.
Fitly the broidered foot-cloth marks his path,
Whom Justice leadeth to his long-lost home
With unexpected train. What else remains
Our sleepless zeal, with favour of the gods,
Shall order as befits.

Aga.—Daughter of Leda, guardian of my house!
Almost thou seem'st to have spun thy welcome out
To match my lengthened absence; but I pray thee
Praise with discretion, and let other mouths
Proclaim my pæans. For the rest, abstain
From delicate tendance that would turn my manhood
To woman's temper. Not in barbaric wise
With prostrate reverence base, kissing the ground,
Mouth sounding salutations; not with purple,
Breeder of envy, spread my path. Such honors
Suit the immortal gods; me, being mortal,
To tread on rich-flowered carpetings wise fear
Prohibits. As a man, not as a god,
Let me be honored. Not the less my fame
Shall be far blazoned, that on common earth
I tread untapestried. A sober heart
Is the best gift of God; call no man happy
Till death hath found him prosperous to the close.
For me, if what awaits me fall not worse
Than what hath fallen, I have good cause to look
Bravely on fate.

Clytem.— Nay, but my good lord will not
In this gainsay my heart's most warm desire.

Aga.—My wish and will thou shalt not lightly mar.

Clytem.—Hast thou a vow belike, and fear'st the gods?

Aga.—If e'er man knew, I know my will in this.
Clytem.—Had Priam conquered, what had Priam done?
Aga.—His feet had trod the purple; doubt it not.
Clytem.—What Priam would, thou may'st, unless the fear
Of popular blame make Agamemnon quail.
Aga.—But popular babble strengthens Envy's wing.
Clytem.—Thou must be envied if thou wilt be great.
Aga.—Is it a woman's part to hatch contention?
Clytem.—For once be conquered; they who conquer may
Yield with a grace.
Aga.— And thou in this vain strife
Must be perforce the conqueror; is it so?
Clytem.—'Tis even so: for once give me the reins.
Aga.—Thou hast thy will. Come, boy, unbind these sandals,
That are the prostrate subjects to my feet,
When I do tread; for with shod feet I never
May leave my print on the sea-purple, lest
Some god with jealous eye look from afar
And mark me. Much I fear with insolent foot
To trample wealth, and rudely soil the web
Whose precious threads the pure-veined silver buys.
So much for this. As for this maid, receive
The stranger kindly: the far-seeing gods
Look down with love on him who mildly sways.
For never yet was yoke of slavery borne
By willing neck; of all the captive maids
The choicest flower she to my portion fell.
And now, since thou art victor o'er my will,
I tread the purple to my father's hall.
Clytem.—The wide sea flows; and who shall dry it up?
The ocean flows, and in its vasty depths
Is brewed the purple's die, as silver precious,
A tincture ever-fresh for countless robes.
But Agamemnon's house is not a beggar;
With this, and with much more the gods provide us;
And purple I had vowed enough to spread
The path of many triumphs, had a god
Given me such 'hest oracular to buy
The ransom of thy life. We have thee now,
Both root and trunk, a tree rich leafage spreading
To shade this mansion from the Sirian dog.
Welcome, thou double blessing! to this hearth
That bringest heat against keen winter's cold,
And coolness when the sweltering Jove prepares
Wine from the crudeness of the bitter grape;

Enter the house, made perfect by thy presence.
Jove, Jove, the perfecter! perfect thou my vow,
And thine own counsels quickly perfect thou! (Exeunt.

CHORAL HYMN

STROPHE I

Whence these shapes of fear that haunt me?
These hovering portents why?
Is my heart a sere inspired,
To chaunt unbidden and unhired
Notes of dark prophecy?
Blithe confidence, my bosom's lord,
That swayed the doubtful theme,
Arise, and with thy clear command
Chase the vain-vexing dream!
Long years have rolled; and still I fear,
As when the Argive band
Unloosed their cables from the shore,
And eager plied the frequent oar
To the far Ilian strand.

ANTISTROPHE I

Now they return: my vouching eyes
To prop my faith conspire,
And yet my heart, in self-taught hymns,
As with a Fury's burden brims,
And will not own the lyre.
I fear, I fear: the bold-faced Hope
Hath left my heart all drear;
And my thought, not idly tossed within,
Feels evil creeping near.
For the heart hath scent of things to come
And prophesies by fear;
And yet I pray, may all conspire
To prove my boding heart a liar,
And me a foolish seer.

STROPHE II

Full-blooded health, that in the veins
With lusty pulses hotly wells,
Shall soon have check. Disease beside it
Wall to wall, ill-sundered, dwells.

The proud trireme, with sudden shock,
In its mid career, on a sunken rock
Strikes, and all is lost.
Yet there is hope; the ship may rein
Its plunge, from whelming ruin free,
If with wise sling the merchant fling
Into the greedy sea
A part to save the whole. And thus
Jove, that two-handed stores for us,
In our mid woe may pause,
Heap gifts on gifts from yearly furrows,
And save the house from swamping sorrows,
And lean starvation's jaws.

ANTISTROPHE II

But, oh! when black blood stains the ground,
And the mortal mortal lies,
Shall the dead hear when thou chauntest?
To thy charming shall he rise?
Once there was a leech so wise
Could raise the dead, but, from the skies,
Struck by Jove, he ceased.
But cease my song. Were link with link
In the chain of things not bound together
That each event must wait its time,
Nor one dare trip the other,
My tongue had played the prophet's part,
And rolled the burden from my heart;
But now, to doubt resigned,
With smothered fears, all dumb I wait
The unravelling hour; while sparks of fate
Flit through my darksome mind.

Enter CLYTEMNESTRA

Clytem.—Come thou, too, in; this maid, I mean; Cassandra!
For not in wrath Jove sent thee here to share
Our family lustrations, and to stand,
With many slaves, beside the household altar.
Step from this car, nor bear thy spirit proudly
Above thy fate, for even Alcmena's son,
To slavery sold, once bore the hated yoke.
What must be, must be; rather thank the chance
That gave thee to an old and wealthy house;
For they who reap an unexpected growth

Of wealth, are harsh to slaves beyond the line
Of a well-tempered rule. Here thou shalt find
The common use of bondage.
Chorus.— Plainly she speaks;
And thou within Fate's iron toils once caught
Wert wise to go—if go thou wilt—but, soothly,
Thou hast no willing look.
Clytem.— Nay, an' she be not
Barbarian to the bone, and speaking nought
Save swallow jabber, she shall hear my voice.
I'll pierce her marrow with it.
Chorus.— Captive maid,
Obey! thou shouldst; 'tis best; be thou persuaded
To leave thy chariot-seat and follow her.
Clytem.—No time have I to stand without the gate
Prating with her. Within, on the central hearth,
The fire burns bright, the sheep's fat slaughter waiting,
To furnish forth a banquet that transcends
The topmost of our hopes. Wilt thou obey,
Obey me quickly! If with stubborn sense
Thou hast not ear to hear, nor voice to speak,
Answer my sign with thy barbarian hand.
Chorus.—A wise interpreter the maid demands;
Like a wild beast new caught, even so she stands.
Clytem.—Ay! she is mad; her wit to sober counsels
Is deaf; she comes from the new-captured city,
Untaught to bear the Argive bit with patience,
But foams and dashes bloody froth. I will not
Make yourself base by wasting words on her (Exit.
Chorus.—Poor maid, I may not blame; I pity thee.
Come, leave thy seat; for, though the yoke be strange,
Necessity compels, and thou must bear it.

STROPHE I

Cass.—Ah! ah! woes me! woe! woe!
Apollo! O Apollo!
Chorus.—Why dost thou wail to Loxias? is he
A gloomy god that he should list sad tales?

ANTISTROPHE I

Cass.—Ah! ah! woes me! woe! woe!
Apollo! O Apollo!
Chorus.—Again with evil-omened voice she cries
Upon the god least fit to wait on woe.

STROPHE II

Cass.—Apollo! Apollo!
My way-god, my leader Apollo!
Apollo the destroyer!
Thou with light labour hast destroyed me quite.
Chorus.—Strange oracles against herself she speaks;
Ev'n in the bondsman's bosom dwells the god.

ANTISTROPHE II

Cass.—Apollo! Apollo!
Apollo, my leader, whither hast thou led me?
My way-god, Apollo?
What homes receive thy captive prophetess?
Chorus.—The Atridæ's homes. This, an' thou knowst it not,
I tell thee; and the words I speak are true.

STROPHE III

Cass.—Ha! the house of the Atridæ!
Well the godless house I know,
With the dagger and the rope,
And the self-inflicted blow!
Where red blood is on the floor,
And black murder at the door—
This house—this house I know.
Chorus.—She scents out slaughter, mark me, like a hound,
And tracks the spot where she shall feast on blood.

ANTISTROPHE III

Cass.—Ay! I scent a truthful scent,
And the thing I say I know.
See! see! these weeping children,
How they vouch the monstrous woe!
Their red wounds are bleeding fresh,
And their father eats their flesh,
This bloody house I know.
Chorus.—The fame of thy divinings far renowned
Have reached us, but we wish no prophets here.

STROPHE IV

Cass.—Ha! ha! what plots she now!
A new sorrow, a new snare
To the house of the Atridæ,

And a burden none may bear!
A black harm to all and each,
A disease that none may leech,
And the evil plot to mar
All help and hope is far.
Chorus.—Nay now I'm lost and mazed in vain surmise.
What first she said I knew—the common rumour.

ANTISTROPHE IV

Cass.—Ha! woman wilt thou dare?
Thy bed's partner and thy mate
In the warm refreshing bath
Shall he find his bloody fate?
How shall I dare to say
What comes and will not stay?
See, to do her heart's command
Where she stretches her red hand!
Chorus.—Not yet I understand: through riddles dark
And cloudy oracles my wits are wandering.

STROPHE V

Cass.—Ha! what bloody sight is this!
'Tis a net of Hades spread—
'Tis a snare to snare her lord,
The fond sharer of her bed.
The black chorus of the place
Shout for vengeance o'er the race,
Whose offence cries for atoning,
With a heavy death of stoning!

STROPHE VI

Chorus.—What black Fury of the place
Shall shout vengeance o'er the race?
Such strange words I hate to hear.
The blithe blood, that crimson ran
In my veins, runs pale and wan
With the taint of yellow fear,
As when in the mortal anguish,
Life's last fitful glimpses languish
And Fate, as now, is near!

ANTISTROPHE V

Cass.—Ha! ha! the work proceeds!

From the bull keep back the cow!
Lo! now she seizes him
By the strong black horn, and now
She hath wrapt him round with slaughter
She strikes! and in the water
Of the bath he falls. Mark well,
In the bath doth murder dwell.

ANTISTROPHE VI

Chorus.—No prophetic gift is mine
The dark saying to divine,
But this sounds like evil quite;
For to mortal man was never
The diviner's voice the giver
Of a message of delight,
But in words of mazy mourning,
Comes the prophet's voice of warning,
With a lesson of affright.

STROPHE VII

Cass.—Fill the cup, and brim the woe!
'Tis my own heart's blood must flow
Me! miserable me!
From old Troy why didst thou bring me
Poor captive maid, to sing thee
Thy dirge, and die with thee?

STROPHE VIII

Chorus.—By a god thou art possessed,
And he raveth in thy breast,
And he sings a song of thee
That hath music, but no glee.
Like a dun-plumed nightingale
That, with never-sated wail,
Crieth Itys! Itys! aye,
As it scatters, in sweet flow,
The thick blossoms of its woe,
So singest thou to-day.

ANTISTROPHE VII

Cass.—Ah! the clear-toned nightingale!
Mellow bird, thou dost not wail,
For the good gods gave to thee

A light shape of fleetest winging,
A bright life of sweetest singing,
But a sharp-edged death to me.

ANTISTROPHE VIII

Chorus.—By a god thou art possessed,
And he goads thee without rest,
And he racks thy throbbing brain
With a busy-beating pain,
And he presses from thy throat
The heavy struggling note,
And the cry that rends the air.
Who bade her tread this path,
With the prophecy of wrath,
And the burden of despair?

STROPHE IX

Cass.—O the wedlock and the woe
Of the evil Alexander,
To his chiefest friends a foe!
O my native stream Scamander,
Where in youth I wont to wander,
And was nursed for future woes,
Where thy swirling current flows!
But now on sluggish shore
Of Cocytus I shall pour,
'Mid the Acherusian glades,
My divinings to the shades.

STROPHE X

Chorus.—Nothing doubtful is the token;
For the words the maid hath spoken
To a very child are clear.
She hath pierced me to the marrow;
And her cry of shrieking sorrow
Ah! it crushes me to hear.

ANTISTROPHE IX

Cass.—The proud city lieth lowly,
Nevermore to rise again!
It is lost and ruined wholly;
And before the walls in vain

Hath my pious father slain
Many meadow-cropping kine,
To appease the wrath divine.
Where it lieth it shall lie,
Ancient Ilium: and I
On the ground, when all is past,
Soon my reeking heart shall cast.

ANTISTROPHE X

Chorus.—Ah! the mighty god, wrath-laden,
He hath smote the burden maiden
With a weighty doom severe.
From her heart sharp cries he wringeth,
Dismal, deathful strains she singeth,
And I wait the end in fear.
Cass.—No more my prophecy, like a young bride
Shall from a veil peep forth, but like a wind
Waves shall it dash from the west in the sun's face,
And curl high-crested surges of fierce woes,
That far outbillow mine. I'll speak no more
In dark enigmas. Ye my vouchers be,
While with keen scent I snuff the breath of the past,
And point the track of monstrous crimes of old.
There is a choir, to destiny well-tuned,
Haunts these doomed halls, no mellow-throated choir,
And they of human blood have largely drunk:
And by that wine made bold, the Bacchanals
Cling to their place of revels. The sister'd Furies
Sit on these roofs, and hymn the prime offence
Of this crime-burthened race; the brother's sin
That trod the brother's bed. Speak! do I hit
The mark, a marksman true? or do I beat
Your doors, a babbling beggar prophesying
False dooms for hire? Be ye my witnesses,
And with an oath avouch, how well I know
The hoary sins that hang upon these walls.
Chorus.—Would oaths make whole our ills, though I should wedge them
As stark as ice? But I do marvel much
That thou, a stranger born, from distant seas,
Dost know our city as it were thine own.
Cass.—Even this to know, Apollo stirred my breast.
Chorus.—Apollo! didst thou strike the god with love?
Cass.—Till now I was ashamed to hint the tale.

Chorus.—The dainty lips of nice prosperity
Misfortune opens.
Cass.— Like a wrestler he
Strove for my love; he breathed his grace upon me.
Chorus.—And hast thou children from divine embrace?
Cass.—I gave the word to Loxias, not the deed.
Chorus.—Hadst thou before received the gift divine?
Cass.—I had foretold my countrymen all their woes.
Chorus.—Did not the anger of the god pursue thee?
Cass.—It did; I warned, but none believed my warning.
Chorus.—To us thou seem'st to utter things that look
Only too like the truth.
Cass.— Ah me! woe! woe!
Again strong divination's troublous whirl
Seizes my soul, and stirs my labouring breast
With presages of doom. Lo! where they sit,
These pitiful young ones on the fated roof,
Like to the shapes of dreams! The innocent babes,
Butchered by friends that should have blessed them, and
In their own hands their proper bowels they bear,
Banquet abhorred, and their own father eats it.
This deed a lion, not a lion-hearted
Shall punish; wantonly in her bed, whose lord
Shall pay the heavy forfeit, he shall roll,
And snare my master—woe's me, even my master,
For slavery's yoke my neck must learn to own.
Ah! little weens the leader of the ships,
Troy's leveller, how a hateful bitch's tongue,
With long-drawn phrase, and broad-sown smile, doth weave
His secret ruin. This a woman dares;
The female mars the male. Where shall I find
A name to name such monster? dragon dire,
Rock-lurking Scylla, the vexed seaman's harm,
Mother of Hades, murder's Mænad, breathing
Implacable breath of curses on her kin.
All-daring woman! shouting in her heart,
As o'er the foe, when backward rolls the fight,
Yet hymning kindliest welcome with her tongue.
Ye look mistrustful; I am used to that.
That comes which is to come; and ye shall know
Full soon, with piteous witness in your eyes,
How true, and very true, Cassandra spake.
Chorus.—Thyestes' banquet, and his children's flesh
I know, and shudder; strange that she should know
The horrors of that tale; but for the rest

She runs beyond my following.

Cass.— Thus I said;
Thine eyes shall witness Agamemnon's death.

Chorus.—Hush, wretched maiden! lull thy tongue to rest,
And cease from evil-boding words!

Cass.— Alas!
The gods that heal all evil, heal not this.

Chorus.—If it must be; but may the gods forefend!

Cass.—Pray thou, and they will have more time to kill.

Chorus.—What man will dare to do such bloody deed?

Cass.—I spake not of a man: thy thoughts shoot wide.

Chorus.—The deed I heard, but not whose hand should do it.

Cass.—And yet I spake good Greek with a good Greek tongue.

Chorus.—Thou speakest Apollo's words: true, but obscure.

Cass.—Ah me! the god! like fire within my breast
Burns the Lycéan god. Ah me! pain! pain!
A lioness two-footed with a wolf
Is bedded, when the noble lion roamed
Far from his den; and she will murder me.
She crowns the cup of wrath; she whets the knife
Against the neck of the man, and he must pay
The price of capture, I of being captive.
Vain gauds, that do but mock my grief, farewell!
This laurel-rod, and this diviner's wreath
About my neck, should they outlive the wearer?
Away! As ye have paid me, I repay.
Make rich some other prophetess with woe!
Lo! where Appolo looks, and sees me now
Doff this diviner's garb, the self-same weeds
He tricked me erst withal, to live for him,
The public scorn, the scoff of friends and foes,
The mark of every ribald jester's tongue,
The homeless girl, the raving mountebank,
The beggar'd, wretched, starving maniac.
And now who made the prophetess unmakes her,
And leads me to my doom—ah! not beside
My father's altar doomed to die! the block
From my hot life shall drink the purple stain.
But we shall fall not unavenged: the gods
A mother-murdering shoot shall send from far
To avenge his sire; the wanderer shall return
To pile the cope-stone on these towering woes.
The gods in heaven a mighty oath have sworn,
To raise anew the father's prostrate fate
By the son's arm.—But why stand here, and beat

The air with cries, seeing what I have seen;
When Troy hath fallen, suffering what it suffered,
And they who took the city by the doom
Of righteous gods faring as they shall fare?
I will endure to die, and greet these gates
Of Hades gaping for me. Grant me, ye gods,
A mortal stroke well-aimed, and a light fall
From cramped convulsion free! Let the red blood
Flow smoothly from its fount, that I may close
These eyes in peaceful death.

Chorus.— O hapless maid!
And wise as hapless! thou hast spoken long!
But if thou see'st the harm, why rush on fate
Even as an ox, whom favouring gods inspire
To stand by the altar's steps, and woo the knife.

Cass.—I'm in the net. Time will not break the meshes.

Chorus.—But the last moment of sweet life is honoured.

Cass.—My hour is come; what should I gain by flight?

Chorus.—Thou with a stout heart bravely look'st on fate.

Cass.—Bravely thou praisest: but the happy hear not
Such commendations.

Chorus. Yet if death must come,
His fame is fair who nobly fronts the foe.

Cass.—Woe's me, the father and his noble children!

Chorus.—Whither now? What father and what child? Speak.

Cass.—(Approaching and starting from the house.)
Woe! woe!

Chorus.—What means this woe? What horrid fancy scares thee?

Cass.—Blood-dripping murder reeks from yonder house.

Chorus.—How? 'Tis the scent of festal sacrifice.

Cass.—The scent of death—a fragrance from the grave.

Chorus.—Soothly no breath of Syrian nard she names.

Cass.—But now the time is come. I go within
To wail for Agamemnon and myself.
I've done with life. Farewell! My vouchers ye,
Not with vain screaming, like a fluttering bird,
Above the bush I cry. Yourselves shall know it
Then when, for me a woman, a woman dies,
And for a man ill-wived a man shall fall.
Trust me in this. Your honest faith is all
The Trojan guest, the dying woman, craves.

Chorus.—O wretched maid! O luckless prophetess.

Cass.—Yet will I speak one other word, before
I leave this light. Hear thou my vows, bright sun,
And, though a slave's death be a little thing,

Send thou the avenging hand with full requital,
To pay my murders back, as they have paid.
Alas! the fates of men! their brightest bloom
A shadow blights; and, in their evil day,
An oozy sponge blots out their fleeting prints,
And they are seen no more. From bad to worse
Our changes run, and with the worst we end. (Exit.

Chorus.—Men crave increase of riches ever
With insatiate craving. Never
From the finger-pointed halls
Of envied wealth their owner calls,
"Enter no more! I have enough!"
This man the gods with honour crowned;
He hath levelled with the ground
Priam's city, and in triumph
Glorious home returns;
But if doomed the fine to pay
Of ancient guilt, and death with death
To guerdon in the end,
Who of mortals will not pray
From high-perched Fortune's favour far,
A blameless life to spend.

Aga. (From within.)—O I am struck! struck with a mortal blow!

Chorus.—Hush! what painful voice is speaking there of strokes and mortal blows?

Aga.—O struck again! struck with a mortal blow!

Chorus.—'Tis the king that groans; the work, the bloody work, I fear, is doing.
Weave we counsel now together, and concert a sure design.

1st Chorus.—I give my voice to lift the loud alarm,
And rouse the city to besiege the doors.

2nd Chorus.—Rather forthwith go in ourselves, and prove
The murderer with the freshly-dripping blade.

3rd Chorus.—I add my pebble to thine. It is not well
That we delay. Fate hangs upon the moment.

4th Chorus.—The event is plain, with this prelusive blood
They hang out signs of tyranny to Argos.

5th Chorus.—Then why stay we? Procrastination they
Tramp underfoot; they sleep not with their hands.

6th Chorus.—Not so. When all is dark, shall we unwisely
Rush blindfold on an unconsulted deed?

7th Chorus.—Thou speakest well. If he indeed be dead,
Our words are vain to bring him back from Hades.

8th Chorus.—Shall we submit to drag a weary life
Beneath the shameless tyrants of this house?

9th Chorus.—Unbearable! and better far to die!
Death is a gentler lord than tyranny.
10th Chorus.—First ask we this, if to have heard a groan
Gives a sure augury that the man is dead.
11th Chorus.—Wisdom requires to probe the matter well:
To guess is one thing, and to know another.
12th Chorus.—So wisely spoken. With full-voiced assent
Inquire we first how Agamemnon fares.

(*The scene opens from behind, and discovers* CLYTEMNESTRA *standing over the dead bodies of* AGAMEMNON *and* CASSANDRA.)

Clytem.—I spoke to you before; and what I spoke
Suited the time; nor shames me now to speak
Mine own refutal. For how shall we entrap
Our foe, our seeming friend, in scapeless ruin,
Save that we fence him round with nets too high
For his o'erleaping? What I did, I did
Not with a random inconsiderate blow,
But from old Hate, and with maturing Time.
Here, where I struck, I take my rooted stand,
Upon the finished deed: the blow so given,
And with wise forethought so by me devised,
That flight was hopeless, and to ward it vain.
With many-folding net, as fish are caught,
I drew the lines about him, manteled round
With bountiful destruction; twice I struck him,
And twice he groaning fell with limbs diffused
Upon the ground; and as he fell, I gave
The third blow, sealing him a votive gift
To gloomy Hades, saviour of the dead.
And thus he spouted forth his angry soul.
Bubbling a bitter stream of frothy slaughter,
And with the dark drops of the gory dew
Bedashed me; I delighted nothing less
Than doth the flowery calix, full surcharged
With fruity promise, when Jove's welkin down
Distils the rainy blessing. Men of Argos,
Rejoice with me in this, or, if ye will not,
Then do I boast alone. If e'er 'twas meet
To pour libations to the dead, he hath them
In justest measure. By most righteous doom,
Who drugged the cup with curses to the brim,
Himself hath drunk damnation to the dregs.

Chorus.—Thou art a bold-mouthed woman. Much we marvel
To hear thee boast thy husband's murder thus.

Clytem.—Ye tempt me as a woman, weak, unschooled.
But what I say, ye know, or ought to know,
I say with fearless heart. Your praise or blame
Is one to me. Here Agamemnon lies,
My husband, dead, the work of this right hand—
The hand of a true workman. Thus it stands.

STROPHE

Chorus.—Woman! what food on wide earth growing
Hast thou eaten of? What draught
From the briny ocean quaffed,
That for such deed the popular breath
Of Argos should with curious crown thee,
As a victim crowned for death?
Thou hast cast off: thou hast cut off
Thine own husband: thou shalt be
From the city of the free
Thyself a cast-off: justly hated
With staunch hatred unabated.
Clytem.—My sentence thou hast spoken; shameful flight,
The citizens' hate, the people's vengeful curse:
For him thou hast no curse, the bloody man
Who, when the fleecy flocks innumerous pastured,
Passed the brute by, and sacrificed my child,
My best-beloved, fruit of my throes, to lull
The Thracian blasts asleep. Why did thy wrath,
In righteous guerdon of this foulest crime,
Not chase this man from Greece? A greedy ear
And a harsh tongue thou hast for me alone.
But mark my words, threats I repay with threats;
If that thou canst subdue me in fair fight,
Subdue me; but if Jove for me decide,
Thou shalt be wise, when wisdom comes too late.

ANTISTROPHE

Chorus.—Thou are high and haughty-hearted,
And from lofty thoughts within thee
Mighty words are brimming o'er:
For thy sober sense is madded
With the purple-dripping gore;
And thine eyes with fatness swell
From bloody feasts: but mark me well,
Time shall come, avenging Time,
And hunt thee out, and track thy crime:

Then thou, when friends are far, shalt know
Stroke for stroke, and blow for blow.

Clytem.—Hear thou this oath, that seals my cause with right:
By sacred Justice, perfecting revenge,
By Até, and the Erinnys of my child,
To whom I slew this man, I shall not tread
The threshold of pale Fear, the while doth live
Ægisthus, now, as he hath been, my friend,
Stirring the flame that blazes on my hearth,
My shield of strong assurance. For the slain,
Here lieth he that wronged a much-wronged woman,
Sweet honey-lord of Trojan Chryseids.
And for this spear-won maid, this prophetess,
This wise diviner, well-beloved bed-fellow,
And trusty messmate of great Agamemnon,
She shares his fate, paying with him the fee
Of her own sin, and like a swan hath sung
Her mortal song beside him. She hath been
Rare seasoning added to my banquet rare.

STROPHE I

Chorus.—O would some stroke of Fate—no dull disease
Life's strings slow-rending,
No bed-bound pain—might bring, my smart to soothe,
The sleep unending!
For he, my gracious lord, my guide, is gone,
Beyond recalling;
Slain for a woman's cause, and by the hands
Of woman falling.

STROPHE II

O Helen! Helen! phrenzied Helen,
Many hearts of thee are telling
Damned destruction thou hast done,
There where thousands fell for one
'Neath the walls of Troy

ANTISTROPHE II

Bloomed from thee the blossom gory
Of famous Agamemnon's glory;
Thou hast roused the slumbering strife,
From age to age, with eager knife,
Watching to destroy.

STROPHE III

Clytem.—Death invoke not to relieve thee
From the ills that vainly grieve thee!
Nor, with ire indignant swelling,
Blame the many-murdering Helen!
Damned destruction did she none,
There, where thousands fell for one,
'Neath the walls of Troy.

ANTISTROPHE I

O god that o'er the doomed Atridan halls
With might prevailest,
Weak woman's breast to do thy headlong will
With mudred mailest!
O'er his dead body, like a boding raven,
Thou tak'st thy station,
Piercing my marrow with thy savage hymn
Of exultation.

ANTISTROPHE III

Clytem.—Nay, but now thou speakest wisely;
This thrice-potent god precisely
Works our woe, and weaves our sorrow.
He with madness stings the marrow,
And with greed that thirsts for blood;
Ere to-day's is dry, the flood
Flows afresh to-morrow.

STROPHE IV

Chorus.—Him, even him, this terrible god, to bear
These walls are fated;
From age to age he worketh wildly there
With wrath unsated.
Not without Jove, Jove cause and end of all,
Nor working vainly.
Comes no event but with high sway the gods
Have ruled it plainly.

STROPHE V

Chorus.—O the king! the king! for thee
Tears in vain my cheek shall furrow,
Words in vain shall voice my sorrow!

As in a spider's web thou liest;
Godless meshes spread for thee,
An unworthy death thou diest!

STROPHE VI

Chorus.—There, even there thou liest, woe's me, outstretched
On couch inglorious;
O'er thee the knife prevailed, keen-edged, by damned
Deceit victorious.

STROPHE VII

Clytem.—Nay, be wise, and understand;
Say not Agamemnon's wife
Wielded in this human hand
The fateful knife.
But a god, my spirit's master,
The unrelenting old Alastor
Chose this wife, his incarnation,
To avenge the desecration
Of foul-feasting Atreus; he
Gave, to work his wrath's completion
To the babes this grown addition.

ANTISTROPHE IV

Chorus.—Thy crime is plain: bear thou what thou hast merited,
Guilt's heavy lading;
But that fell Spirit, from sire to son inherited,
Perchance was aiding.
Black-mantled Mars through consanguineous gore
Borne onwards blindly,
Old horrors to atone, fresh Murder's store
Upheaps unkindly.

ANTISTROPHE V

O the king! the king! for thee
Tears in vain my cheek shall furrow,
Words in vain shall voice my sorrow!
As in a spider's web thou liest;
Godless meshes spread for thee,
An unworthy death thou diest.

ANTISTROPHE VI

Chorus.—There, even there, thou liest, woe's me, outstretched
On couch inglorious!

O'er thee the knife prevailed, keen-edged, by damned
Deceit victorious.

ANTISTROPHE VII

Clytem.—Say not thou that he did die
By unworthy death inglorious;
Erst himself prevailed by damned
Deceit victorious.
Then when he killed the deep-lamented
Iphigenia, nor relented
When for my body's fruit with weeping
I besought him. Springs his reaping
From what seed he sowed. Not he
In Hades housed shall boast to-day;
So slain by steel as he did slay.

STROPHE VIII

Chorus.—I'm tossed with doubt, on no sure counsel grounded,
With fear confounded.
No drizzling drops, a red ensanguined shower,
Upon the crazy house, that was my tower,
Comes wildly sweeping,
On a new whetstone whets her blade the Fate
With eyes unweeping.

STROPHE IX

Chorus.—O Earth, O Earth, would thou hadst yawned,
And in thy black pit whelmed me wholly,
Ere I had seen my dear-loved lord
In the silver bath thus bedded lowly!
Who will bury him? and for him
With salt tears what eyes shall brim?
Wilt thou do it—thou, the wife
That slew thy husband with the knife?
Wilt thou dare, with blushless face,
Thus to offer a graceless grace?
With false show of pious moaning,
Thine own damned deed atoning?

STROPHE X

Chorus.—What voice the praises of the godlike man
Shall publish clearly?
And o'er his tomb the tear from eyelids wan
Shall drop sincerely?

STROPHE XI

Clytem.—In vain thy doubtful heart is tried
With many sorrows. By my hand
Falling he fell, and dying died.
I too will bury him; but no train
Of mourning men for him shall plain
In our Argive streets; but rather
In the land of sunless cheer
She shall be his convoy; she,
Iphigenía, his daughter dear.
By the stream of woes swift-flowing,
Round his neck her white arms throwing,
She shall meet her gentle father,
And greet him with a kiss.

ANTISTROPHE VIII

Chorus.—Crime quitting crime, and which the more profanely
Were questioned vainly;
'Tis robber robbed, and slayer slain, for, though
Oft-times it lag, with measured blow for blow
Vengeance prevaileth,
While great Jove lives. Who breaks the close-linked woe
Which Heaven entaileth?

ANTISTROPHE IX

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And in thy black pit whelmed me wholly,
Ere I had seen my dear-loved lord
In the silver bath thus bedded lowly!
Who will bury him? and for him
With salt tears, what eyes shall brim?
Wilt thou do it? thou, the wife
That killed thy husband with the knife?
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ANTISTROPHE X

Chorus.—What voice the praises of the god-like man
Shall publish clearly?
And o'er his tomb the tear from eyelids wan
Shall drop sincerely?

ANTISTROPHE XI

Clytem.—Cease thy cries. Where Heaven entaileth,
Thyself didst say, woe there prevaileth.
But for this tide enough hath been
Of bloody work. My score is clean.
Now to the ancient stern Alastor,
That crowns the Pleisthenids with disaster,
I vow, having reaped his crop of woe
From me, to others let him go,
And hold with them his bloody bridal,
Of horrid murders suicidal!
Myself, my little store amassed
Shall freely use, while it may last,
From murdering madness healed.

Enter ÆGISTHUS

Ægis.—O blessed light! O happy day proclaiming
The justice of the gods! Now may I say
The Olympians look from heaven sublime, to note
Our woes, and right our wrongs, seeing as I see
In the close meshes of the Erinnyes tangled
This man—sweet sight to see!—prostrate before me,
Having paid the forfeit of his father's crime.
For Atreus, ruler of this Argive land,
This dead man's father—to be plain—contending
About the mastery, banished from the city
Thyestes, his own brother and my father.
In suppliant guise back to his hearth again
The unhappy prince returned, content if he
Might tread his native acres, not besprent
With his own blood. Him with a formal show
Of hospitality—not love—received
The father of this dead, the godless Atreus;
And to my father for the savoury use
Of festive viands gave his children's flesh
To feed on; in a separate dish concealed
Were legs and arms, and the fingers' pointed tips,
Broke from the body. These my father saw not;
But what remained, the undistinguished flesh,
He with unwitting greed devoured, and ate
A curse to Argos. Soon as known, his heart
Disowned the unholy feast, and with a groan
Back-falling he disgorged it. Then he vowed
Dark doom to the Pelopidae, and woes

Intolerable, while his heel he spurned
The supper, and thus voiced the righteous curse:
THUS PERISH ALL THE RACE OF PLEISTHENES!
See here the cause why Agamemnon died,
And why his death most righteous was devised
By me; for I, Thyestes' thirteenth son,
While yet a swaddled babe, was driven away
To houseless exile with my hapless sire.
But me avenging Justice nursed, and taught me,
Safer by distance, with invisible hand
To reach this man, and weave the brooded plot,
That worked his sure destruction. Now 'tis done;
And gladly might I die, beholding him,
There as he lies where Vengeance trapped his crimes.

Chorus.—Ægisthus, that thou wantonest in the woe
Worked by thy crime I praise not. Thou alone
Didst slay this man, and planned the piteous slaughter
With willing heart. So say'st thou: but mark well,
Justice upon thy head the stony curse
Shall bring avoidless from the people's hand.

Ægis.—How? Thou who sittest on the neathmost bench,
Speak'st thus to me who ply the upper oar?
'Tis a hard task to teach an old man wisdom,
And dullness at thy years is doubly dull;
But chains and hunger's pangs sure leeches are,
And no diviner vends more potent balms
To drug a doting wit. Have eyes, and see,
Kick not against the pricks, nor vainly beat
Thy head on rocks.

Chorus (to Clytemnestra).—Woman, how couldst thou dare,
On thine own hearth to plot thy husband's death;
First having shamed his bed, to welcome him
With murder from the wars?

Ægis.—Speak on; each word shall be a fount of tears,
I'll make thy tongue old Orpheus' opposite.
He with sweet sounds led wild beasts where he would,
Thou where thou wilt not shalt be led, confounding
The woods with baby cries. Thou barkest now,
But, being bound, the old man shall be tame.

Chorus.—A comely king wert thou to rule the Argives!
Whose wit had wickedness to plan the deed,
But failed the nerve in thy weak hand to do it.

Ægis.—'Twas wisely schemed with woman's cunning wit
To snare him. I, from ancient date his foe,
Stood in most just suspicion. Now, 'tis done;

And I, succeeding to his wealth, shall know
To hold the reins full tightly. Who rebels
Shall not with corn be fatted for my traces,
But, stiffly haltered, he shall lodge secure
In darkness, with starvation for his mate.

Chorus.—Hear me yet once. Why did thy dastard hand
Shrink from the deed? But now his wife hath done it,
Tainting this land with murder most abhorred,
Polluting Argive gods. But still Orestes
Looks on the light; him favouring Fortune shall
Nerve with one stroke to smite this guilty pair.

Ægis.—Nay, if thou for brawls art eager, and for battle, thou shalt know—

Chorus.—Ho! my gallant co-mates, rouse ye! 'tis an earnest business now!
Quick, each hands with sure embracement hold the dagger by the hilt!

Ægis.—I can also hold a hilted dagger—not afraid to die.

Chorus.—Die!—we catch the word thou droppest: lucky chance. if thou wert dead!

Clytem.—Not so, best-beloved! there needeth no enlargement to our ills.
We have reaped a liberal harvest, gleaned a crop of fruitful woes,
Gained a loss in brimming measure: blood's been shed enough to-day.
Peacefully, ye hoary Elders, enter now your destined homes,
Ere mischance o'ertake you, deeming what is done hath so been done,
As it behoved to be, contented if the dread god add no more,
He that now the house of Pelops smiteth in his anger dire.
Thus a woman's word doth warn ye, if that ye have wit to hear.

Ægis.—Babbling fools are they; and I forsooth must meekly bear the shower,
Flowers of contumely cast from doting drivellers, tempting fate!
O! if length of hoary winters brought discretion, ye should know
Where the power is; wisely subject you the weak to me the strong.

Chorus.—Ill beseems our Argive mettle to court a coward on a throne.

Ægis.—Shielded now, be brave with words; my deeds expect some future day.

Chorus.—Ere that day belike some god shall bring Orestes to his home.

Ægis.—Feed, for thou hast nothing better, thou and he, on empty hope.

Chorus.—Glut thy soul, a lusty sinner, with sin's fatness, while thou may'st.

Ægis.—Thou shalt pay the forfeit, grey-beard, of thy braggart tongue anon.

Chorus.—Oh, the cock beside its partlet now may crow right valiantly!

Clytem.—Heed not thou these brainless barkings. While to folly folly calls,
Thou and I with wise command shall surely sway these Argive halls.

ANTIGONE

ANTIGONE

(Sophocles, Greek poet, son of Sophillus, was born at Colonus, Attica, 495 B.C. He was appointed one of the generals in the Samian campaign. He wrote more than a hundred works, mostly dramas and some claim that he vanquished Aeschylus, in tragedy, at the age of twenty-eight, but this statement is greatly challenged. In his "Aedipus Rex" he rises highest in dramatic force. His "Antigone," one of his greatest tragedies, is the pathetic tale of how a girl is doomed to death for giving her brother burial, after being forbidden by King Creon. Sophocles died in the year 406 B.C.)

PERSONS REPRESENTED

Antigone, Ismene, } daughters of Œdipus, late king of Thebes.

Creon, brother to Jocasta, late queen of Thebes, Captain-general of the army, and successor to the throne.

A Sentinel.

Hæmon, son to Creon, betrothed to Antigone.

Tiresias, a seer.

A Messenger in attendance on Creon.

Eurydice, wife to Creon.

The Chorus is composed of Senators of Thebes.

Guards; Attendants; a Boy leading Tiresias.

Scene, before the Royal Palace at Thebes. Time, early morning. Enter ANTIGONE *and* ISMENE

Antigone.—Ismene, dear in very sisterhood,
Do you perceive how Heaven upon us two
Means to fulfil, before we come to die,
Out of all ills that grow from Œdipus—
What not, indeed? for there's no sorrow or harm,
No circumstance of scandal or of shame
I have not seen, among your griefs, and mine.

And now again, what is this word they say
Our Captain-general proclaimed but now
To the whole city? Did you hear and heed?
Or are you blind, while pains of enemies
Are passing on your friends?

Ismene.— Antigone,
To me no tidings about friends are come,
Pleasant or grievous, ever since we two
Of our two brothers were bereft, who died
Both in one day, each by the other's hand.
And since the Argive host in this same night
Took itself hence, I have heard nothing else,
To make me happier, or more miserable.

Antigone.—I knew as much; and for that reason made you
Go out of doors—to tell you privately.

Ismene.—What is it? I see you have some mystery.

Antigone.—What! has not Creon to the tomb preferred
One of our brothers, and with contumely
Withheld it from the other? Eteocles
Duly, they say, even as by law was due,
He hid beneath the earth, rendering him honour
Among the dead below; but the dead body
Of Polynices, miserably slain,
They say it has been given out publicly
None may bewail, none bury, all must leave
Unwept, unsepulchred, a dainty prize
For fowl that watch, gloating upon their prey!
This is the matter he has had proclaimed—
Excellent Creon! for your heed, they say,
And mine, I tell you—mine! and he moves hither,
Meaning to announce it plainly in the ears
Of such as do not know it, and to declare
It is no matter of small moment; he
Who does any of these things shall surely die;
The citizens shall stone him in the streets.
So stands the case. Now you will quickly show
If you are worthy of your birth or no.

Ismene.—But O rash heart, what good, if it be thus,
Could I effect, helping or hindering?

Antigone.—Look, will you join me? will you work with me?

Ismene.—In what attempt? What mean you?

Antigone.— Help me lift
The body up—

Ismene.— What, would you bury him?
Against the proclamation?

Antigone.— My own brother
And yours I will! If you will not, I will;
I shall not prove disloyal.
Ismene.— You are mad!
When Creon has forbidden it?
Antigone.— From mine own
He has no right to stay me.
Ismene.— Alas, O sister,
Think how our father perished! self-convict—
Abhorred—dishonoured—blind—his eyes put out
By his own hand! How she who was at once
His wife and mother with a knotted noose
Laid violent hands on her own life! And how
Our two unhappy brothers in one day
Each on his own head by the other's hand
Wrought common ruin! We now left alone—
Do but consider how most miserably
We too shall perish, if despite of law
We traverse the behest or power of kings.
We must remember we are women born,
Unapt to cope with men; and, being ruled
By mightier than ourselves, we have to hear
These things—and worse. For my part, I will ask
Pardon of those beneath, for what perforce
I needs must do, but yield obedience
To them that walk in power; to exceed
Is madness, and not wisdom.
Antigone.— Then in future
I will not bid you help me; nor henceforth,
Though you desire, shall you, with my good will,
Share what I do. Be what seems right to you;
Him will I bury. Death, so met, were honour;
And for that capital crime of piety,
Loving and loved, I will lie by his side.
Far longer is there need I satisfy
Those nether Powers, than powers on earth; for there
For ever must I lie. You, if you will,
Hold up to scorn what is approved of Heaven!
Ismene.—I am not one to cover things with scorn;
But I was born too feeble to contend
Against the state.
Antigone.— Yes, you can put that forward;
But I will go and heap a burial mound
Over my most dear brother.

Ismene.— My poor sister,
How beyond measure do I fear for you!
Antigone.—Do not spend fear on me. Shape your own course.
Ismene.—At least announce it, then, to nobody,
But keep it close, as I will.
Antigone.— Tell it, tell it!
You'll cross me worse, by far, if you keep silence—
Not publish it to all.
Ismene.— Your heart beats hotly
For chilling work!
Antigone.— I know that those approve
Whom I most need to please.
Ismene.— If you could do it!
But you desire impossibilities.
Antigone.—Well, when I find I have no power to stir,
I will cease trying.
Ismene.— But things impossible
'Tis wrong to attempt at all.
Antigone.— If you will say it,
I shall detest you soon; and you will justly
Incur the dead man's hatred. Suffer me
And my unwisdom to endure the weight
Of what is threatened. I shall meet with nothing
More grievous, at the worst, than death, with honour.
Ismene.—Then go, if you will have: and take this with you,
You go on a fool's errand! (Exit Antigone.
Lover true
To your beloved, none the less, are you! (Exit.

Enter Theban Senators, *as Chorus*

Chorus

I. 1

Sunbeam bright! Thou fairest ray
Then, or ever a torch could sear
Over the portals seven!
O orb of aureate day,
How glorious didst thou rise
O'er Dirca's streams, shining from heaven,
Him, the man with shield of white
Who came from Argos in armour dight
Hurrying runagate o'er the plain,
Jerking harder his bridle rein;

Who by Polynices' quarrellous broil
Stirred up in arms to invade our soil
With strident cries as an eagle flies
Swooped down on the fields before him,
'Neath cover of eagle pinion white
As drifted snow, a buckler bright
On many a breast, and a horsetail crest
From each helm floating o'er him.

I. 2

Yawning with many a blood-stained spear
Around our seven-gated town
High o'er the roofs he stood;
Then, or ever a torch could sear
With flames the rampart-crown—
Or ever his jaws were filled with blood
Of us and ours, lo, he was fled!
Such clatter of war behind him spread,
Stress too sore for his utmost might
Matched with the Dragon in the fight;
For Zeus abhors tongue-glorious boasts;
And straightway as he beheld their hosts,
Where on they rolled, covered with gold,
Streaming in mighty eddy,
Scornfully with a missile flame
He struck down Capaneus, as he came
Uplifting high his victory-cry
At the topmost goal already.

II. 1

Tantalus-like aloft he hung, then fell;
Earth at his fall resounded;
Even as, maddened by the Bacchic spell,
On with torch in hand he bounded,
Breathing blasts of hate.
So the stroke was turned aside,
Mighty Ares rudely dealing
Others elsewhere, far and wide,
Like a right-hand courser wheeling
Round the goals of fate.

For captains seven at portals seven
Found each his match in the combat even,

And left on the field both sword and shield
As a trophy to Zeus, who o'erthrew them;
Save the wretched twain, who against each other
Though born of one father, and one mother,
Laid lances at aim—to their own death came,
And the common fate that slew them.

II. 2

But now loud Victory returns at last
On Theban chariots smiling,
Let us begin oblivion of the past,
Memories of the late war beguiling
Into slumber sound.
Seek we every holy shrine;
There begin the night-long chorus;
Let the Theban Boy divine,
Bacchus, lead the way before us,
Shaking all the ground.

Leave we the song: the King is here;
Creon, Menœceus' son, draws near;
To the function strange—like the heaven-sent change
Which has raised him newly to power:
What counsel urging—what ends of state,
That he summons us to deliberate,
The elders all, by his herald's call,
At a strange unwonted hour?

Enter CREON, *attended*

Creon.—Sirs, for the ship of state—the Gods once more,
After much rocking on a stormy surge,
Set her on even keel. Now therefore you,
You of all others, by my summoners
I bade come hither; having found you first
Right loyal ever to the kingly power
In Laius' time; and next, while Œdipus
Ordered the commonwealth; and since his fall,
With steadfast purposes abiding still,
Circling their progeny. Now, since they perished,
Both on one day, slain by a two-edged fate,
Striking and stricken, sullied with a stain
Of mutual fratricide, I, as you know,
In right of kinship nearest to the dead,
Possess the throne and take the supreme power.

Howbeit it is impossible to know
The spirit of any man, purpose or will,
Before it be displayed by exercise
In government and laws. To me, I say,
Now as of old, that pilot of the state
Who sets no hand to the best policy,
But remains tongue-tied through some terror, seems
Vilest of men. Him too, who sets a friend
Before his native land, I prize at nothing.
God, who seest all things always, witness it!
If I perceive, where safety should have been,
Mischief advancing toward my citizens,
I will not sit in silence; nor account
As friend to me the country's enemy;
But thus I deem: she is our ark of safety;
And friends are made then only, when, embarked
Upon her deck, we ride the seas upright.
Such are the laws by which I mean to further
This city's welfare; and akin to these
I have given orders to the citizens
Touching the sons of Œdipus. Eteocoles,
Who in this city's quarrel fought and fell,
The foremost of our champions in the fray,
They should entomb with the full sanctity
Of rites that solemnize the downward road
Of their dead greatest. Him the while, his brother,
That Polynices who, returning home
A banished man, sought to lay waste with fire
His household Gods, his native country—sought
To glut himself with his own kindred's blood,
Or carry them away to slavery,
It has been promulgated to the city
No man shall bury, none should wail for him;
Unsepulchred, shamed in the eyes of men,
His body shall be left to be devoured
By dogs and fowls of the air. Such is my will.
Never with me shall wicked men usurp
The honours of the righteous; but whoe'er
Is friendly to this city shall, by me,
Living or dead, be honoured equally.

1 Senator.—Creon Menœceus' son, we hear your pleasure
Both on this city's friend, and on her foe;
It is your sovereignty's prerogative
To pass with absolute freedom on the dead,
And us, who have survived them.

Creon.— Please to see
What has been said performed.
1 Senator.— That charge confer
On some one who is younger.
Creon.— Of the body?
Sentries are set, already.
1 Senator.— Then what else
Is there, besides, which you would lay on us?
Creon.—Not to connive at disobedience.
1 Senator.—There's no such fool as to embrace his death.
Creon.—Death is the penalty. But men right often
Are brought to ruin, through their dreams of gain.

Enter a Sentinel

Sentinel.—My lord, I will not say—"breathless with speed
I come, plying a nimble foot;" for truly
I had a many sticking-points of thought,
Wheeling about to march upon my rear.
For my heart whispered me all sorts of counsel;
"Poor wretch, why go, to meet thy sentence?"—
"Wretch,
Tarrying again? If Creon hear the news
From others' lips, how shalt thou then not rue it?"
Out of this whirligig it came to pass.
I hastened—at my leisure; a short road,
Thus, becomes long. Nevertheless at last
It won the day to come hither, to your presence;
And speak I will, though nothing have to say;
For I come clinging to the hope that I
Can suffer nothing—save my destiny.
Creon.—Well—and what caused you this disheartenment?
Sentinel.—First let me tell you what concerns myself.
I do protest, I neither did the deed,
Nor saw it done, whoever 'twas who did it;
Nor should I rightly come to any harm.
Creon.—At all events you are a good tactician,
And fence the matter off all round. But clearly
You have some strange thing to tell?
Sentinel.— Yes. Serious tidings
Induce much hesitation.
Creon.— Once for all
Please to speak out, and make an end, and go.
Sentinel.—Why, I am telling you. That body some one
Has just now buried—sprinkled thirsty dust

Over the form—added the proper rites,
And has gone off.

Creon. What say you? What man dared
To do it?

Sentinel.— I know not. There was no dint there
Of any mattock, not a sod was turned;
Merely hard ground and bare, without a break,
Without a rut from wheels; it was some workman
Who left no mark. When the first day-sentry
Shewed what had happened, we were all dismayed.
The body had vanished; not indeed interred,
But a light dust lay on it, as if poured out
By one who shunned the curse; and there appeared
No trace that a wild beast, or any hound,
Had some, or torn the carcase. Angry words
Were bandied up and down, guard blaming guard,
And blows had like to end it, none being by
To hinder; for each one of us in turn
Stood culprit, none convicted, but the plea
"I know not" passed. Ready were we to take
Hot iron in hand, or pass through fire, and call
The Gods to witness, that we neither did it,
Nor were accessory to any man
Who compassed it, or did it. So at last,
When all our searching proved to be in vain
There speaks up one, who made us, every man,
Hang down our heads for fear, knowing no way
To say him nay, or without scathe comply,
His burden was, this business must be carried
To you, without reserve. That voice prevailed;
And me, poor wretch, the lot condemns to get
This piece of luck. I come a post unwilling,
I well believe it, to unwilling ears;
None love the messenger who brings bad news.

1 Senator.—My lord, my heart misgave me from the first
This must be something more than natural.

Creon.—Truce to your speech, before I choke with rage,
Lest you be found at once grey-beard and fool!
To say that guardian deities would care
For this dead body, is intolerable.
Could they, by way of supereminent honour
Paid to a benefactor, give him burial,
Who came to fire their land, their pillared fanes
And sacred treasures, and set laws at nought?
Or do you see Gods honouring the bad?

'Tis false. These orders from the first some people
Hardly accepted, murmuring at me,
Shaking their heads in secret, stiffening
Uneasy necks against this yoke of mine.
They have suborned these sentinels to do it,
I know that well. No such ill currency
Ever appeared, as money to mankind:
This is it that sacks cities, this routs out
Men from their homes, and trains and turns astray
The minds of honest mortals, setting them
Upon base actions; this made plain to men
Habits of all misdoing, and cognizance
Of every work of wickedness. Howbeit
Such hireling perpetrators, in the end,
Have wrought so far, that they shall pay for it.
So surely as I live to worship Jove,
Know this for truth; I swear it in your ears;
Except you find and bring before my face
The real actor in this funeral,
Death, by itself, shall not suffice for you,
Before, hung up alive, you have revealed
The secret of this outrage; that henceforth
You may seek plunder—not without respect
Of where your profit lies; and may be taught
It is not good to covet all men's pay;
For mark you! by corruption few men thrive,
And many come to mischief.

Sentinel.— Have I leave
To say a word, or shall I turn and go?

Creon.—Cannot you see your prating tortures me?

Sentinel.—Pricks you how deep? In the ears, or to the spleen?

Creon.—Why do you gauge my chafing, where it lies?

Sentinel.—Your heart-ache were the doer's, your ear-ache mine.

Creon.—Out, what a bare-faced babbler born art thou!

Sentinel.—Never the actor in this business, though!

Creon.—Yes, and for money you would sell your soul!

Sentinel.—Plague on it! 'tis hard, a man should be suspicious,
And with a false suspicion!

Creon. Yes, suspicion;
Mince it as best you may. Make me to know
Whose are these doings, or you shall soon allow
Left-handed gains work their own punishment.

(Exit.

Sentinel.—I wish he may be found. Chance must decide.
Whether or no, you will not, certainly,

See me returning hither. Heaven be praised
I am in safety, past all thought or dream!

(Exit.

CHORUS

I. 1

Much is there passing strange;
  Nothing surpassing mankind.
He it is loves to range
Over the ocean hoar,
Thorough the surges' roar,
  South winds raging behind;

Earth, too, wears he away,
  The Mother of Gods on high,
Tireless, free from decay;
With team he furrows the ground,
And the ploughs go round and round,
  As year on year goes by.

I. 2

The bird-tribes, light of mind,
  The races of beasts of prey,
And sea-fish after their kind,
Man, abounding in wiles,
Entangles in his toils
  And carries captive away.
The roamers over the hill,
  The field-inhabiting deer,
By craft he conquers, at will;
He bends beneath his yoke
The neck of the steed unbroke,
  And pride of the upland steer.

II. 1

He has gotten him speech, and fancy breeze-betost,
  And for the state instinct of order meet;
He has found him shelter from the chilling frost
  Of a clear sky, and from the arrowy sleet;
Illimitable in cunning, cunning-less
  He meets no change of fortune that can come;
He has found escape from pain and helplessness;
  Only he knows no refuge from the tomb.

II. 2

Now bends he to the good, now to the ill,
With craft of art, subtle past reach of sight;
Wresting his country's laws to his own will,
Spurning the sanctions of celestial right;
High in the city, he is made city-less,
Whoso is corrupt, for his impiety;
He that will work the works of wickedness,
Let him not house, let him not hold, with me!
At this monstrous vision I stand in
Doubt! How dare I say, well knowing her,
That this maid is not—Antigone!
Daughter of Œdipus!
Hapless child, of a hapless father!
Sure—ah surely they did not find thee
Madly defying our king's commandments,
And so prisoner bring thee here?

Enter Sentinel with ANTIGONE

Sentinel.—This is the woman who has done the deed.
We took her burying him. Where's Creon?
1 Senator. Here
Comes he again, out of the house, at need.

Enter CREON

Creon.—What is it? In what fit season come I forth?
Sentinel.—My lord, I see a man should never vow
He will not do a thing, for second thoughts
Bely the purpose. Truly I could have sworn
It would be long indeed ere I came hither
Under that hail of threats you rained on me.
But since on unforseen happy surprise
Passes all other pleasing out of measure,
I come, though I forswore it mightily,
Bringing this maiden, who was caught in act
To set that bier in order. Here, my lord,
No lot was cast; this windfall is to me,
And to no other. Take her, now, yourself;
Examine and convict her, as you please;
I wash my hands of it, and ought, of right,
To be clean quit of the scrape, for good and all.
Creon.—You seized—and bring—her! In what way, and whence?

Sentinel.—Burying that man, herself! You know the whole.
Creon.—Are you in earnest? Do you understand
What you are saying?
Sentinel.— Yes, that I saw this girl
Burying that body you forbade to bury.
Do I speak clear and plain?
Creon.— How might this be,
That she was seen, and taken in the act?
Sentinel.—Why thus it happened. When we reached the place,
Wrought on by those dread menacings from you,
We swept away all dust that covered up
The body, and laid the clammy limbs quite bare,
And windward from the summit of the hill,
Out of the tainted air that spread from him,
We sat us down, each, as it might be, rousing
His neighbour with a clamour of abuse,
Wakening him up, whenever any one
Seemed to be slack in watching. This went on,
Till in mid air the luminous orb of day
Stood, and the heat grew sultry. Suddenly
A violent eddy lifted from the ground
A hurricane, a trouble of the sky;
Ruffling all foliage of the woodland plain
It filled the horizon; the vast atmosphere
Thickened to meet it; we, closing our eyes,
Endured the Heaven-sent plague. After a while,
When it had ceased, there stands this maiden in sight,
And wails aloud, shrill as the bitter note
Of the sad bird, when as she finds the couch
Of her void nest robbed of her young; so she,
Soon as she sees the body stripped and bare,
Bursts out in shrieks, and calls down curses dire
On their heads who had done it. Straightway then
She gathers handfuls of dry dust, and brings them,
And from a shapely brazen cruse held high
She crowns the body with drink-offerings,
Once, twice, and thrice. We at the sight rushed forward,
And trapped her, nothing daunted, on the spot;
And taxed her with the past offense, and this
The present. Not one whit did she deny;
A pleasant though a pitiful sight to me;
For nothing's sweeter than to have got off

In person; but to bring into mischance
Our friends is pitiful. And yet to pay
No more than this is cheap, to save one's life.

Creon.—Do you, I say—you, with your downcast brow—
Own or deny that you have done this deed?

Antigone.—I say I did it; I deny it not.

Creon.—Take yourself hence, whither you will, sir knave;
You are acquitted of a heavy charge.
(Exit Sentinel.
Now tell me, not at length, but in brief space,
Knew you the order not to do it?

Antigone.— Yes,
I knew it; what should hinder? It was plain.

Creon.—And you made free to overstep my law?

Antigone.—Because it was not Zeus who ordered it,
Nor Justice, dweller with the Nether Gods,
Gave such a law to men; nor did I deem
Your ordinance of so much binding force,
As that a mortal man could overbear
The unchangeable unwritten code of Heaven;
This is not of today and yesterday,
But lives for ever, having origin
Whence no man knows: whose sanctions I were loath
In Heaven's sight to provoke, fearing the will
Of any man. I knew that I should die—
How otherwise? even although your voice
Had never so prescribed. And that I die
Before my hour is due, that I count gain.
For nothing's sweeter than to have got off
How should he fail to gain by dying? Thus
To me the pain is light, to meet this fate;
But had I borne to leave the body of him
My mother bare unburied, then, indeed,
I might feel pain; but as it is, I cannot;
And if my present action seems to you
Foolish—'tis, like I am found guilty of folly
At a fool's mouth!

1 Senator.— Lo you, the spirit stout
Of her stout father's child—unapt to bend
Beneath misfortune!

Creon.— But be well assured,
Tempers too stubborn are the first to fail;
The hardest iron from the furnace, forged
To stiffness, you may see most frequently
Shivered and broken; and the chafing steeds

I have known governed with a slender curb.
It is unseemly that a household drudge
Should be misproud; but she was conversant
With outrage, ever since she passed the bounds
Laid down by law; then hard upon that deed
Comes this, the second outrage, to exult
And triumph in her deed. Truly if here
She wield such powers uncensured, she is man,
I woman! Be she of my sister born,
Or nearer to myself than the whole band
Of our domestic tutelary Jove,
She, and the sister—for her equally
I charge with compassing this funeral—
Shall not escape a most tremendous doom.
And call her; for within the house but now
I saw her, frenzied and beside herself;
And it is common for the moody sprite
Of plotters in the dark to no good end
To have been caught, planning its knavery,
Before the deed is acted. None the less
I hate it, when one taken in misdoing
Straight seeks to gloss the facts!

Antigone.— Would you aught more
Than take my life, whom you did catch?

Creon.— Not I;
Take that, take all.

Antigone.— Then why do you delay?
Since naught is pleasing of your words to me,
Or, as I trust, can ever please, so mine
Must needs be unacceptable to you,
And yet from whence could I have gathered praise
More worthily, than from depositing
My own brother in a tomb? These, all of them,
Would utter one approval, did not fear
Seal up their lips. 'Tis tyranny's privilege,
And not the least—power to declare and do
What it is minded.

Creon.— You, of all this people,
Are singular in your discernment.

Antigone.— Nay,
They too discern; they but refrain their tongues
At your behest.

Creon.— And you are not ashamed
That you deem otherwise?

Antigone.— It is no shame

To pay respect to our own flesh and blood.
Creon.—And his dead foeman, was not he your brother
As well?
Antigone.— Yes, the same sire's and mother's son.
Creon.—Why pay, then, honours which are wrongs to him?
Antigone.—The dead clay makes no protest.
Creon.— Not although
His with a villain's share your reverence?
Antigone.—It was no bondman perished, but a brother.
Creon.—Spoiling, I say, this country; while his rival
Stood for it.
Antigone.— All the same, these rites are due
To the underworld.
Creon.— But not in equal measure
Both for the good man and the bad.
Antigone.— Who knows
This is not piety there?
Creon.— The enemy
Can never be a friend, even in death.
Antigone.—Well, I was made for fellowship in love,
Not fellowship in hate.
Creon.— Then get you down
Thither, and love, if you must love, the dead!
No woman, while I live, shall order me.

CHORUS

See where out by the doors Ismene
Weeping drops of sisterly grieving
Comes; and a cloud o'erhanging her eyebrows
Mars her dark-flushed cheek, and moistens
Her fair face with pitiful tears.

Enter Attendants with ISMENE

Creon.—And you—who like a viper unawares
Have crept into my house, and sucked me bloodless,
While I unknowingly was fostering you,
Twin furies, to the upsetting of my throne—
Come, tell me, will you say you also shared
This burying, or protest your innocence?
Ismene.—Yes, I have done it—if Antigone
Says so—I join with her to share the blame.
Antigone.—That justice will not suffer; you refused,
And I—I had no partner.
Ismene.— In your trouble

I do not blush to claim companionship
Of what you have to endure.
Antigone.— Whose was the deed
Death and the spirits of the dead can tell!
A friend in words is not a friend for me.
Ismene.—Shame me not, sister, by denying me
A death, for honouring the dead, with you!
Antigone.—Mix not your death with mine. Do not claim work
You did not touch. I shall suffice to die.
Ismene.—And what care I for life, if I lost you?
Antigone.—Ask Creon; you are dutiful to him.
Ismene.—Why do you cross me so, to no good purpose?
Antigone.—Nay, I am sick of heart, if I do make
My mock of you.
Ismene.— Nay but what can I do,
Now, even yet, to help you?
Antigone.— Save yourself;
I do not grudge you your escape.
Ismene.— O me
Unhappy! And must I miss to share your fate?
Antigone.—You made your choice, to live; I mine, to die.
Ismene.—Not if you count my words unsaid.
Antigone.— By some
Your judgment is approved; by others mine.
Ismene.—Then our delinquency is equal, too.
Antigone.—Take courage, you are living; but my life
Long since has died, so I might serve the dead.
Creon.—Of these two girls I swear the one even now
Has been proved witless; the other was so born.
Ismene.—Ah sir, the wretched cannot keep the wit
That they were born with, but it flits away.
Creon.—Yours did so, when you chose to join ill-doers
In their misdoing.
Ismene.— How could I live on
Alone, without my sister?
Creon.— Do not say
"My sister:" for you have no sister more.
Ismene.—What, will you put to death your own son's bride?
Creon.—He may go further afield—
Ismene.— Not as by troth
Plighted to her by him.
Creon.— Unworthy wives
For sons of mine I hate.
Antigone.— O dearest Hæmon,

How are you slighted by your father!

Creon.— I

Am weary of your marriage, and of you.

Ismene.—Your own son! will you tear her from his arms?

Creon.—Death will prevent that bridal-rite, for me.

1 Senator.—I see, the sentence of this maiden's death
Has been determined.

Creon.— Then we see the same.
An end of trifling. Slaves, there, take them in!
As women, henceforth, must they live—not suffered
To gad abroad; for even bold men flinch,
When they view Death hard by the verge of Life.
Exeunt Antigone and Ismene, guarded.

CHORUS

I. 1

Happy the man whose cup of life is free
From taste of evil! If Heaven's influence shake them,
No ill but follows, till it overtake them,
All generations of his family;
Like as when before the sweep
Of the sea-borne Thracian blast
The surge of ocean coursing past
Above the cavern of the deep
Rolls up from the region under
All the blackness of the shore,
And the beaten beaches thunder
Answer to the roar.

I. 2

Woes upon woes on Labdacus' race I see —
Living or dead—inveterately descend;
And son with sire entangled, without end,
And by some God smitten without remedy;
For a light of late had spread
O'er the last surviving root
In the house of Œdipus;
Now, the sickle murderous
Of the Rulers of the dead,
And wild words beyond control,
And the frenzy of her own soul,
Again mow down the shoot.

II. 1

Thy power, O God, what pride of man constraineth,
Which neither sleep, that all things else enchaineth,
Nor even the tireless moons of Heaven destroy?
Thy throne is founded fast,
High on Olympus, in great brilliancy,
Far beyond Time's annoy.
Through present and through future and through past
Abideth one decree;
Nought in excess
Enters the life of man without unhappiness.

II. 2

For wandering Hope to many among mankind
Seems pleasurable; but to many a mind
Proves but a mockery of its wild desires.
They know not aught, nor fear,
Till their feet feel the pathway strewn with fires.
"If evil good appear,
That soul to his ruin is divinely led"—
(Wisely the word was said!)
And short the hour
He spends unscathed by the avenging power.

Hæmon comes, thy last surviving
Child. Is he here to bewail, indignant,
His lost bride, Antigone? Grieves he
For a vain promise—her marriage-bed?

Enter HÆMON

Creon.—We shall know soon, better than seers can tell us.
Son, you are here in anger, are you not,
Against your sire, hearing his final doom
Upon your bride to be? Or are we friends,
Always, with you, whate'er our policy?
Hæmon.—Yours am I, father; and you guide my steps
With your good counsels, which for my part I
Will follow closely; for there is no marriage
Shall occupy a larger place with me
Than your direction, in the path of honour.
Creon.—So is it right, my son, to be disposed—
In everything to back your father's quarrel.
It is for this men pray to breed and rear

In their homes dutiful offspring—to requite
The foe with evil, and their father's friend
Honour, as did their father. Whoso gets
Children unserviceable—what else could he
Be said to breed, but troubles for himself,
And store of laughter for his enemies?
Nay, never fling away your wits, my son,
Through liking for a woman; recollect,
Cold are embracings, where the wife is naught,
Who shares your board and bed. And what worse sore
Can plague us, than a loved one's worthlessness?
Better to spurn this maiden as a foe!
Leave her to wed some bridegroom in the grave!
For, having caught her in the act, alone
Of the whole city disobeying me,
I will not publicly bely myself,
But kill her. Now let her go glorify
Her God of kindred! If I choose to cherish
My own born kinsfolk in rebelliousness,
Then verily I must count on strangers too.
For he alone who is a man of worth
In his own household will appear upright
In the state also; and whoe'er offends
Against the laws by violence, or thinks
To give commands to rulers—I deny
Favour to such. Obedience is due
To the state's officer in small and great,
Just and unjust commandments; he who pays it
I should be confident would govern well,
And cheerfully be governed, and abide
A true and trusty comrade at my back,
Firm in the ranks amid the storm of war.
There lives no greater fiend than Anarchy;
She ruins states, turns houses out of doors,
Breaks up in rout the embattled soldiery;
While Discipline preserves the multitude
Of the ordered host alive. Therefore it is
We must assist the cause of order; this
Forbids concession to a feminine will;
Better be outcast, if we must, of men,
Than have it said a woman worsted us.

1 Senator.—Unless old age have robbed me of myself,
I think the tenor of your words is wise.

Hæmon.—Father, the Gods plant reason in mankind,

Of all good gifts the highest; and to say
You speak not rightly in this, I lack the power;
Nor do I crave it. Still, another's thought
Might be of service; and it is for me,
Being your son, to mark the words, the deeds,
And the complaints, of all. To a private man
Your frown is dreadful, who has things to say
That will offend you; but I secretly
Can gather this; how the folk mourn this maid,
For noblest acts dies by the worst of deaths,
Who her own brother battle-slain—unburied—
Would not allow to perish in the fangs
Of carrion hounds or any bird of prey;
And" (so the whisper darkling passes round)
"Is she not worthy to be carved in gold?"
Father, beside your welfare there is nothing
More prized by me; for what more glorious crown
Can be to children, than their father's honour?
Or to a father, from his sons, than theirs?
Do not persist, then, to retain at heart
One sole idea, that the thing is right
Which your mouth utters, and nought else beside.
For all men who believe themselves alone
Wise, or that they possess a soul or speech
Such as none other, turn them inside out,
They are found empty; and though a man be wise,
It is no shame for him to live and learn,
And not to stretch a course too far. You see
How all the trees on winter torrent banks,
Yielding, preserve their sprays; those that would stem it
Break, roots and all; the shipman too, who keeps
The vessel's main-sheet taut, and will not slacken,
Goes cruising, in the end, keel uppermost:
Let thy wrath go! Be willing to relent!
For if some sense, even from a younger head,
Be mine to afford, I say it is far better
A man should be, for every accident,
Furnished with inbred skill; but what of that?
Since nature's bent will have it otherwise,
'Tis good to learn of those who counsel wisely.

1 Senator.—Sir, you might learn, when he speaks seasonably;
And you, from him; for both have spoken well.

Creon.—Men that we are, must we be sent to school
To learn discretion of a boy like this?

Hæmon.—None that's dishonest; and if I am young,
It is not well to have regard to years
Rather than services.
Creon.— Good service is it,
To pay respect to rebels?
Hæmon. — To wrongdoers
I would not even ask for reverence.
Creon.—Was it not some such taint infected her?
Hæmon.—So say not all this populace of Thebes.
Creon.—The city to prescribe me my decrees!
Hæmon.—Look, say you so, you are too young in this!
Creon.—Am I to rule this land after some will
Other than mine?
Hæmon.— A city is no city
That is of one man only.
Creon.— Is not the city
Held to be his who rules it?
Hæmon.— That were brave—
You, a sole monarch of an empty land!
Creon.—This fellow, it seems, fights on the woman's side.
Hæmon.—An you be woman! My forethought is for you.
Creon.—O villain—traversing thy father's rights!
Hæmon.—Because I see you sinning against right.
Creon.—Sin I, to cause my sway to be held sacred?
Hæmon.—You disecrate, by trampling on Heaven's honour.
Creon.—Foul spotted heart—a woman's follower!
Hæmon.—You will not find me serving what is vile.
Creon.—I say this talk of thine is all for her.
Hæmon.—And you, and me, and for the Gods beneath!
Creon.—Never shall she live on to marry thee!
Hæmon.—Die as she may, she shall not die alone.
Creon.—Art thou grown bold enough to threaten, too?
Hæmon.—Where is the threat, to speak against vain counsel?
Creon.—Vain boy, thyself shalt rue thy counselling.
Hæmon.—I had called you erring, were you not my sire.
Creon.—Thou woman's bondman, do not spaniel me!
Hæmon.—Do you expect to speak, and not be answered?
Creon.—Do I so? By Olympus over us,
If thou revile me, and find fault with me,
Never believe but it shall cost thee dear!
Bring out the wretch, that in his sight, at once,
Here, with her bridegroom by her, she may die!
Hæmon.—Not in my sight, at least—not by my side,
Believe it, shall she perish! And for thee—

Storm at the friends who choose thy company!
My face thou never shalt behold again. (Exit.

1 Senator. The man is gone, my lord, headlong with rage;
And wits so young, when galled, are full of danger.

Creon.—Let be, let him imagine more, or do,
Than mortal may; yet he shall not redeem
From sentence those two maidens.

1 Senator.— Both of them?
Is it your will to slay them both alike?

Creon.—That is well said; not her who did not touch it.

1 Senator.—And by what death mean you to kill the other?

Creon.—Into some waste untrodden of mankind
She shall be drawn, and, in some rock-hewn cave,
With only food enough provided her
For expiation, so that all the city
Escape the guilt of blood, buried alive.
There, if she ask him, Hades, the one God
Whom she regards, may grant her not to perish;
Or there, at latest, she shall recognize
It is lost labour to revere the dead. (Exit.

CHORUS

O Love, thou art victor in fight: thou mak'st all things afraid;
Thou couchest thee softly at night on the cheeks of a maid;
Thou passest the bounds of the sea, and the folds of the fields;
To thee the immortal, to thee the ephemeral yields;
Thou maddenest them that possess thee; thou turnest astray
The souls of the just, to oppress them, out of the way;
Thou hast kindled amongst us pride, and the quarrel of kin;
Thou art lord, by the eyes of a bride, and the love-light therein;
Thou sittest assessor with Right; her kingdom is thine,
Who sports with invincible might, Aphrodita divine.

Creon.—Men that we are, must we be sent to school
To learn discretion of a boy like this?

Enter ANTIGONE, *guarded.*

I too, myself, am carried as I look
Beyond the bounds of right;
Nor can I brook
The springing fountain of my tears, to see
My child, Antigone,
Pass to the chamber of universal night.

I. 1

Antigone.—Behold me, people of my native land:
I wend my latest way:
I gaze upon the latest light of day
That I shall ever see;
Death, who lays all to rest, is leading me
To Acheron's far strand
Alive; to me no bridal hymns belong,
For me no marriage song
Has yet been sung; but Acheron instead
Is it, whom I must wed.

Chorus.—Nay but with praise and voicings of renown
Thou partest for that prison-house of the dead;
Unsmitten by diseases that consume,
By sword unvisited,
Thou only of mortals freely shalt go down,
Alive, to the tomb.

1. 2

Antigone.—I have heard tell the sorrowful end of her,
That Phyrgian sojourner
On Sipylus' peak, offspring of Tantalus;
How stony shoots upgrown
Like ivy bands enclosed her in the stone;
With snows continuous
And ceaseless rain her body melts away;
Streams from her tear-flown head
Water her front; likest to hers the bed
My fate prepared today.

Chorus.—She was of godlike nature, goddess-sprung,
And we are mortals, and of human race;
And it were glorious odds
For maiden slain, among
The equals of the Gods
In life—and then in death—to gain a place.

II. 1

Antigone.—They mock me. Gods of Thebes! why scorn you me
Thus, to my face,
Alive, not death-stricken yet?

O city, and you the city's large-dowered race,
Ye streams from Dirca's source,
Ye woods that shadow Theba's chariot-course,
Listen and see,
Let none of you forget
How sacrificed, and for what laws offended,
By no tears friended,
I to the prisoning mound
Of a strange grave am journeying under ground.
Ah me unhappy! (home is none for me;)
Alike in life or death an exile must I be.

Chorus.—Thou to the farthest verge forth-faring,
O my child, of daring,
Against the lofty threshold of the laws
Didst stumble and fall. The cause
Is some ancestral load, which thou art bearing.

II. 2

Antigone.—There didst thou touch upon my bitterest bale—
A threefold tale—
My father's piteous doom,
Doom of us all, scions of Labdacus.
Woe for my mother's bed!
Woe for the ill-starred spouse, from her own womb
Untimely born!
O what a father's house
Was that from whence I drew my life forlorn!
To whom, unwed,
Accursed, lo I come
To sojourn as a stranger in their home!
And thou too, ruined, my brother, in a wife,
Didst by thy death bring death upon thy sister's life!

Chorus.—To pay due reverence is a duty, too:
And power—his power, whose empire is confest,
May no wise be transgressed;
But thee thine own infatuate mood o'er-threw.

Antigone.—Friendless, unwept, unwed,
I, sick at heart, am led

The way prepared for me;
Day's hallowed orb on high
I may no longer see;
For me no tears are spent,
Nor any friends lament
The death I die.

Enter CREON

Creon.—Think you that any one, if help might be
In wailing and lament before he died,
Would ever make an end? Away with her!
Wall her up close in some deep catacomb,
As I have said; leave her alone, apart,
To perish, if she will; or if she live,
To make her tomb her tenement. For us,
We will be guiltless of this maiden's blood;
But here on earth she shall abide no more.

Antigone.—Thou Grave, my bridal chamber! dwelling-place
Hallowed in earth, the everlasting prison
Whither I bent my steps, to join the band
Of kindred, whose more numerous host already
Persephone hath counted with the dead;
Of whom I last and far most miserably
Descend, before my term of life is full;
I come, cherishing this hope especially,
To win approval in my father's sight,
Approval too, my mother, in thine, and thine
Dear brother! for that with these hands I paid
Unto you dead lavement and ordering
And sepulchre-libations; and that now,
Polynices, in the tendance of thy body
I meet with this reward. Yet to the wise
It was no crime, that I did honour thee.
For never had I, even had I been
Mother of children, or if spouse of mine
Lay dead and mouldering, in the state's despite
Taken this task upon me. Do you ask
What argument I follow here of law?
One husband dead, another might be mine;
Sons by another, did I lose the first;
But, sire and mother buried in the grave,
A brother is a branch that grows no more.
Yet I, preferring by this argument

To honour thee to the end, in Creon's sight
Appear in that I did so to offend,
And dare to do things heinous, O my brother!
And for this cause he hath bid lay hands on me,
And leads me, not as wives or brides are led,
Unblest with any marriage, any care
Of children; destitute of friends, forlorn,
Yet living, to the chambers of the dead
See me descend. Yet what celestial right
Did I transgress? How should I any more
Look up to heaven, in my adversity?
Whom should I call to aid? Am I not come
Through piety to be held impious? If
This is approved in Heaven, why let me suffer,
And own that I have sinned; but if the sin
Belong to these—O may their punishment
Be measured by the wrongfulness of mine!

1 Senator.—Still the same storms possess her, with the same
Precipitance of spirit.

Creon.— Then for this
Her guards shall rue their slowness.

Antigone.— Woe for me!
The word I hear comes hand in hand with death!

1 Senator.— I may not say Be comforted, for this
Shall not be so; I have no words of cheer.

Antigone.—O City of Theba! O my country! Gods,
The Fathers of my race! I am led hence—
I linger now no more. Behold me, lords,
The last of your kings' house—what doom is mine,
And at whose hands, and for what cause—that I
Duly performed the dues of piety!

(Exeunt Antigone and guards.

CHORUS

I. 1

For a dungeon brazen-barred
The body of Danae endured
To exchange Heaven's daylight of old,
In a tomb-like chamber immured,
Hid beneath fetter and guard;
And she was born, we are told,
O child, my child, unto honour,
And a son was begotten upon her

To Zeus in a shower of gold.
But the stress of a Fate is hard;
Nor wealth, nor warfare, nor ward,
Nor black ships cleaving the sea
Can resist her, or flee.

I. 2

And the Thracians' king, Dryas's son,
The hasty of wrath, was bound
For his words of mocking and pride;
Dionysus closing him round,
Pent in a prison of stone;
Till, his madness casting aside
Its flower and fury wild,
He knew what God he reviled—
Whose power he had defied;
Restraining the Mænad choir,
Quenching the Evian fire,
Enraging the Muses' throng,
The lovers of song.

II. 1

And by the twofold main
Of rocks Cyanean—there
Lies the Bosporean strand,
And the lone Thracian plain
Of Salmydessus, where
Is Ares' border-land:
Who saw the stab of pain
Dealt on the Phineid pair
At that fierce dame's command;
Blinding the orbits of their blasted sight,
Smitten, without spear to smite,
By a spindle's point made bare,
And by a bloody hand.

II. 2

They mourned their mother dead,
Their hearts with anguish wrung,
Wasting away, poor seed
Of her deserted bed;
Who, Boreas' daughter sprung
From the old Erechtheid breed,

In remote caverns fed
Her native gales among,
Went swiftly as the steed,
Offspring of Heaven, over the steep-down wild;
Yet to her too, my child,
The Destinies, that lead
Lives of long ages, clung.

Enter TIRESIAS *led by a boy*

Tiresias.—Princes of Thebes, two fellow-travellers.
Debtors in common to the eyes of one,
We stand before you; for a blind man's path
Hangs on the guide who marshals him the way.
Creon.—What would'st thou now, reverend Tiresias?
Tiresias.—That will I tell. Do thou obey the seer.
Creon.—I never have departed hitherto
From thy advice.
Tiresias.— And therefore 'tis, thou steerest
The city's course straight forward.
Creon.— Thou hast done me
Good service, I can witness.
Tiresias.— Now again
Think, thou dost walk on fortune's razor-edge.
Creon.—What is it? I tremble but to see thee speak.
Tiresias.—Listen to what my art foreshadoweth,
And thou shalt know. I lately, taking seat
On my accustomed bench of augury,
Whither all tribes of fowl after their kind
Alway resort, heard a strange noise of birds
Screaming with harsh and dissonant impetus;
And was aware how each the other tore
With murderous talons; for the whirr of wings
Rose manifest. Then feared I, and straight made trial
Of sacrifices on the altar-hearths
All blazing; but, out of the offerings,
There sprang no flame; only upon embers charred
Thick droppings melted off the thigh-pieces,
And heaved and sputtered, and the gall-bladders
Burst, and were lost, while from the folds of fat
The loosened thigh-bones fell. Such auguries,
Failing of presage through the unseemliness
Of holy rites, I gather from this lad,
Who is to me, as I to others, guide.

And this state-sickness comes by thy self-will;
For all our hearths and altars are defiled
With prey of dogs and fowl, who have devoured
The dead unhappy son of Œdipus.
Therefore the Gods accept not of us now
Solemns peace-offering or burnt sacrifice,
Nor bird trills out a happy-boding note,
Gorged with the fatness of a slain man's blood.
This, then, my son, consider; that to err
From the right path is common to mankind;
But having erred, that mortal is no more
Losel or fool, who medicines the ill
Wherein he fell, and stands not obstinate.
Conceit of will savours of emptiness.
Give place, then, in the presence of the dead.
Wound not the lift that's perished. Where's thy valour
In slaying o'er the slain? Well I advise,
Meaning thee well; 'tis pleasantest to learn
Of good advisers, when their words bring gain.

Creon.—Old man, ye all, like archers at a mark,
Are loosing shafts at me; I am not spared
Even your soothsayers' practice; by whose tribe
Long since have I been made as merchandize,
And brought, and sold. Gather your gains at will!
Market your Sardian silver, Indian gold!
That man ye shall not cover with a tomb;
Not though the eagle ministers of Jove
To Jove's own throne should bear their prey of him,
Not even for horror at such sacrilege
Will I permit his burial. This I know;
There is no power in any man to touch
The Gods with sacrilege; but foul the falls
Which men right cunning fall, Tiresias—
Old man, I say—when for the sake of gain
They speak foul treason with a fair outside.

Tiresias.—Alas, does no man know, does no man think—

Creon.—What should one think? What common saw is this?

Tiresias.—How far good counsel passes all things good?

Creon.—So far, I think, folly's the worst of harm!

Tiresias.—That is the infirmity that fills thy nature.

Creon.—I care not to retort upon thee, seer.

Tiresias.—Thou dost, thou say'st my oracles are false.

Creon.—All the prophetic tribe are covetous.

Tiresias.—And that of kings fond of disgraceful gain.

Creon.—Know'st thou of whom thou speak'st? I am
thy lord.
Tiresias.—Yea, thou hast saved the state; I gave it thee.
Creon.—Thou art a wise seer, but in love with wrong.
Tiresias.—Thou wilt impel me to give utterance
To my still dormant prescience.
Creon.— Say on;
Only beware thou do not speak for gain.
Tiresias.—For gain of thine, methinks, I do not speak.
Creon.—Thou shalt not trade upon my wits, be sure.
Tiresias.—And be thou sure of this; thou shalt not tell
Many more turns of the sun's chariot-wheel,
Ere thou shalt render satisfaction, one
From thy own loins in payment, dead for dead,
For that thou hast made Life join hands with Death,
And sent a living soul unworthily
To dwell within a tomb, and keep'st a corpse
Here, from the presence of the Powers beneath,
Not for thy rights or any God's above,
But lawlessly in their despite usurped,
Unhallowed, disappointed, uninterred;
Wherefore the late-avenging punishers,
Furies, from Death and Heaven, lay wait for thee,
To take thee in the evil of thine own hands.
Look to it, whether I be bribed who speak;
For as to that, with no great wear of time,
Men's, women's wails to thine own house shall answer,
Also all cities rise in enmity,
To the strown relics of whose citizens
None pays due hallowing, save beasts of prey,
Dogs, or some fowl, whose pinions to their gates—
Yea, to each heart—bear taint defiling them.
Such bolts, in wrath, since thou dar'st anger me,
I loosen at thy bosom, archer-like,
Sure-aimed, whose burning smart thou shalt not shun.
Lead me away, boy, to my own home again;
And let him vent his spleen on younger men,
And learn to keep a tongue more gentle, and
A brain more sober, than he carries now.
(Exeunt Tiresias and Boy.

1 Senator.—The seer is gone, my lord, denouncing woe;
And from the day my old hairs began to indue
Their white for black, we have known him for a
watch

Who never barked to warn the state in vain.
Creon.—I know it too; and I am ill at ease;
'Tis bitter to submit; but Até's hand
Smites bitterly on the spirit that abides her.
1 Senator.—Creon Menœceus' son, be wise at need!
Creon.—What should I do? speak, I will hearken.
1 Senator.— Go,
Set free the maiden from the vault, and build
A tomb for that dead outcast.
Creon.— You approve it?
You deem that I should yield?
1 Senator.— Sir, with all speed.
Swift-footed come calamities from Heaven
To cut off the perverse.
Creon.— O God, 'tis hard!
But I quit heart, and yield; I cannot fight
At odds with destiny.
1 Senator.— Up then, to work!
Commit it not to others!
Creon.— I am gone
Upon the instant. Quickly, quickly men,
You and your fellows, get you, axe in hand,
Up to the place, there yonder; and because
I am thus minded, other than before,
I who did bind her will be there to loose;
For it misgives me it is best to keep
The old appointed laws, all our life long.
(Exeunt Creon and Attendants.

CHORUS

I. 1

Thou by many names addrest,
Child of Zeus loud-thundering,
Glory of a Theban maid,
Who unbidden wanderest
Fair Italia's King,
And art lord in each deep glade
Whither all men seek to her,
Eleusinian Demeter;
Bacchus, who by soft-flowing waters
Of Ismenus habitest
Theba, mother of Bacchant daughters,
With the savage Dragon's stock.

I. 2

Thee the lurid wild-fire meets
O'er the double-crested rock,
Where Corycian Nymphs arow
Bacchic-wise ascending go,
  Thee Castalia's rill;
Thee the ivy-covered capes
Usher forth of Nysa's hill,
And the shore with green of grapes
Clustering, where the hymn to thee
Rises up immortally,
Visitant in Theban Streets,
"Evoe, O Evoe!"

II. 1

Wherefore, seeing thy City thus—
City far above all other
Dear to thee, and her, thy mother
Lightning-slain—by sickness grievous
Holden fast in all her gates,
Come with quickness to relieve us,
By the slopes of Parnasus,
  Or the roaring straits.

II. 2

Hail to thee, the first advancing
In the stars' fire-breathing chorus!
Leader of the nightly strain,
Boy and son of Zeus and King!
Manifest thyself before us
With thy frenzied Thyiad train,
Who their lord Iacchus dancing
  Praise, and all night sing.

Enter a MESSENGER

Messenger.—You citizens who dwell beside the roof
Of Cadmus and Amphion, there is no sort
Of human life that I could ever praise,
Or could dispraise, as constant; Fortune still
Raising and Fortune overthrowing still
The happy and the unhappy; and none can read
What is set down for mortals. Creon, methought
Was enviable erewhile, when he preserved

This land of Cadmus from its enemies,
And took the country's absolute monarchy,
And ruled it, flourishing with a noble growth
From his own seed; and now, he has lost all.
For when men forfeit all their joys in life,
One in that case I do not count alive,
But deem of him as of some animate corse.
Pile now great riches, if thou wilt, at home;
Wear thou the living semblance of a king;
And if delight be lacking, all the rest
I would not purchase, as compared with joy,
From any, for the shadow of a shade.

1 Senator.—What new affliction to the royal stock
Com'st thou to tell?

Messenger.— Death is upon them—death
Caused by the living.

1 Senator.— And who is the slayer?
Speak! who the victim?

Messenger.— Hæmon is no more;
His life-blood spilt, and by no stranger's hand.

1 Senator.—What, by his father's, or his own?

Messenger.— Self-slaughtered;
Wroth with his father for the maiden slain.

1 Senator.—Prophet! how strictly is thy word come true!

Messenger.—Look to the future, for these things are so.

1 Senator.—And I behold the poor Eurydice
Come to us from the palace, Creon's wife;
Either of chance, or hearing her son's name.

Enter EURYDICE

Eurydice.—O all you citizens, I heard the sound
Of your discourse, as I approached the gates,
Meaning to bring my prayers before the face
Of Pallas; even as I undid the bolts,
And set the door ajar, a voice of woe
To my own household pierces through my ears;
And I sink backward on my handmaidens
Afaint for terror; but whate'er the tale,
Tell it again; I am no novice, I,
In misery, that hearken.

Messenger.— Dear my mistress,
I saw, and I will speak, and will let slip
No syllable of the truth. Why should we soothe
Your ears with stories, only to appear

Liars thereafter? Truth is alway right.
—I followed in attendance on your lord,
To the flat hill-top, where despitefully
Was lying yet, harried by dogs, the body
Of Polynices. Pluto's name, and hers,
The wayside goddess, we invoked, to stay
Their anger and be favourable; and him
We washed with pure lustration, and consumed
On fresh-lopped branches the remains of him,
And piled a monument of natal earth
High over all; thence to the maiden's cell,
Chamber of death, with bridal couch of stone,
We made as if to enter. But afar
One fellow hears a loud uplifted wail
Fill all the unhallowed precinct; comes, and tells
His master, Creon; the uncertain sound
Of piteous crying, as he draws more nigh,
Comes round him, and he utters, groaning loud
A lamentable plaint; "Me miserable!
Was I a prophet? Is this path I tread
The unhappiest of all ways I ever went?
My son's voice thrills my ear. What ho, my guard!
Run quickly thither to the tomb where stones
Have been dragged down to make an opening,
Go in and look, whether I really hear
The voice of Hæmon, or am duped by Heaven."
Quickly, at our distracted lord's command,
We looked: and in the tomb's inmost recess
Found we her, as she had been hanged by the neck,
Fast in a strip-like loop of linen; and him
Laid by her, clasping her about the waist,
Mourning his wedlock severed in the grave,
And his sire's deeds, and his ill-fated bride.
He, when he sees them, with a terrible cry
Goes in towards him, calling out aloud
"Ah miserable, what hast thou done? what mind
Hadst thou? by what misfortune are thou crazed?
Come out, my son,—suppliant I ask of thee!"
But with fierce aspect the youth glared at him;
Spat in his face; answered him not a word;
Grasped at the crossed hilts of his sword and drew it,
And—for the father started forth in flight—
Missed him! then, angered with himself, poor fool,
There as he stood he flung himself along
Upon the sword-point firmly planted in

The middle of his breast, and, conscious yet,
Clings to the maid, clasped in his falling arms,
And gasping, sends forth on the pallid cheek
Fast welling drops of blood: So lies he, dead,
With his arms round the dead; there, in the grave
His bridal rite is full; his misery
Is witness to mankind what worst of woe
The lack of counsel brings a man to know!

(Exit Eurydice.

1 Senator.—What do you make of this? The woman's gone
Back, and without one word, of good or bad!

Messenger.—I marvel too; and yet I am in hope
She would not choose, hearing her son's sad fate,
In public to begin her keening-cry;
But rather to her handmaids in the house
Dictate the mourning for a private pain.
She is not ignorant of self-control,
That she should err.

1 Senator.— I know not; but on me
Weigh heavily both silence over-much,
And loud complaint in vain.

Messenger.— Well, we shall know it,
If she hide aught within a troubled heart
Even to suppression of its utterance,
If we approach the house. Yes, you say truly,
It does weigh heavy, silence over-much.

(Exit.

CHORUS

Lo now, Creon himself draws near us,
Clasping a record
Manifest, if we sin not, saying it,
Of ruin unwrought by the hands of others,
But fore-caused by his own self-will.

Enter CREON, *attended with the body of* HÆMON

I. 1

Creon.—O sins of a mind
That is minded to stray!
Mighty to bind
And almighty to slay!
Behold us, kin slayers and slain, O ye who stand by the way!
Ah, newness of death!

O my fruitless design!
New to life's breath,
O son that wert mine,
Ah, ah, thou art dead, thou art sped, for a fault that was mine, not thine!
1 Senator.—Ah, how thou seem'st to see the truth, too late!
Creon.—Ah yes, I have learnt, I know my wretchedness!

II. 1

Heaviness hath o'ertaken me
And mine head the rod;
The roughness hath shaken me
Of the paths I trod;
Woe is me! my delight is brought low, cast under the feet of a God!
Woe for man's labours that are profitless!

Re-enter the MESSENGER

Messenger.—O master, now thou hast and hast in store
Of sorrows; one thou bearest in thine arms,
And one at home thou seemest to be come
Merely to witness.
Creon.— And what more of sorrow,
Or what more sorrowful, is yet behind?
Messenger.—Thy wife, the mother—mother of the dead—
Is, by a blow just fallen, haplessly slain.

I. 2

Creon.—O hard to appease thee,
Haven of Death,
How should it please thee
To end this breath?
O herald of heavy news, what is this thy mouth uttereth?

O man, why slayest thou
A man that is slain?
Alas, how sayest thou
Anew and again
That the slaying of a woman is added to slaying—a pain to a pain?
Messenger.—See for thyself; the palace doors unclose.

(The Altar is disclosed, with the dead body of Eurydice.

Creon.—Woe is me again, for this new sorrow I see.

II. 2

What deed is not done?
What tale is not told?
Thy body, O son,
These arms enfold—
Dead—wretch that I am! Dead, too, is the face these eyes behold.

Ah, child, for thy poor mother! ah for thee!

Messenger.—She with a sharp-edged dagger in her heart
Lies at the altar; and her darkened lids
Close on her wailing for the glorious lot
Of Megareus, who died before, and next
For his, and last, upon her summoning
Evil to fall on thee, the child-slayer!

III. 1

Creon.—Alas, I faint for dread!
Is there none will deal
A thrust that shall lay me dead
With the two-edged steel?
Ah woe is me!
I am all whelmed in utter misery!

Messenger.—It may be so; thou art arraigned of her
Who here lies dead, for the occasion thou
Hast wrought for Destiny on her, and him.
1 Senator.—In what way did she slay herself and die?
Messenger.—Soon as she heard the raising of the wail
For her son's death, she stabbed herself to the heart.

IV. 1

Creon.—Woe is me! to none else can they lay it,
This guilt, but to me!
I, I was the slayer, I say it,
Unhappy, of thee!
O bear me, haste ye, spare not,
To the ends of earth,
More nothing than they who were not
In the hour of birth!
1 Senator.—Thou counsellest well—if anything be well
To follow, in calamity; the ills
Lying in our path, soonest o'erpast, were best.

III. 2

Creon.—Come, thou most welcome Fate,

Appear, O come;
Bring my days' final date,
Fill up their sum!
Come quick, I pray;
Let me not look upon another day!

1 Senator.—This for to-morrow; we must take some thought
On that which lies before us; for these griefs,
They are their care on whom the care has fallen.
Creon.—I did but join your prayer for our desire.
1 Senator.—Pray thou for nothing more; there is no respite
To mortals from the ills of destiny.

IV. 2

Creon.—Lead me forth, cast me out, no other
Than a man undone;
Who did slay, unwitting, thy mother
And thee, my son!
I turn me I know not where
For my plans ill-sped,
And a doom that is heavy to bear
Is come down on my head.
(Exit Creon, attended.

Chorus

Wisdom first for a man's well-being
Maketh, of all things. Heaven's insistence
Nothing allows of man's irreverence;
And great blows great speeches avenging,
Dealt on a boaster,
Teach men wisdom in age, at last.
(Exeunt omnes.

HELEN

HELEN

(Euripedes, Greek tragic dramatist, was born at Salamis, 480 B.C., the son of Mnesarchus, a wealthy trader. He intended to be an athlete, but Euripedes adopted painting and subsequently turned to dramatic work, and at the age of twenty-five brought out his first play, "Peliades." He is said to have written ninety plays, and gained first prize five times. Unlike his great contemporaries, Aeschylus and Sophocles, he appears to have taken no part in public affairs. On the conthary, he is known to have been a student and recluse. His domestic life was unhappy, suffering from the attacks of his great contemporary, Aristophanes. He later forsook Athens, and made his home at the court of Archelaus, king of Macedon, and tradition attributes his death, in 406 B. C., to violence from his enemies. His plays served as a model for other writers, in a later period.)

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA

Helen.	Female Servant.
Teucer.	Messenger.
Chorus of Grecian Dames (Helen's Attendants).	Theoclymenus.
	Theonoe.
Menelaus.	Castor and Pollux.

Scene.—Proteus' Tomb, at the Entrance of Theoclymenus' Palace in Pharos, an Island at the Mouth of the Nile.

HELEN

BRIGHT are these virgin currents of the Nile
Which water Egypt's soil, and are supplied,
Instead of drops from heaven, by molten snow.
But Proteus, while he lived, of these domains
Was lord, he in the isle of Pharos dwelt,
King of all Ægypt; for his wife he gained
One of the nymphs who haunt the briny deep,
Fair Psamathe, after she left the bed
Of Æacus; she in the palace bore
To him two children, one of them a son
Called Theoclymenus, because his life
Is passed in duteous homage to the gods;
A daughter also of majestic mien,
Her mother's darling, in her infant years

(Eidothea called by her enraptured sire):
But when the blooming maid became mature
For nuptial joys, Theonoe was the name
They gave her; all the counsels of the gods,
The present and the future, well she knew,
Such privilege she from her grandsire Nereus
Inherited. But not to fame unknown
Are Sparta's realm, whence I derive my birth,
And my sire, Tyndarus. There prevails a rumour
That to my mother Leda Jove was borne
On rapid wings, the figure of a swan
Assuming, and by treachery gained admission
To her embraces, flying from an eagle,
If we may credit such report. My name
Is Helen; but I also will recount
What woes I have endured; three goddesses,
For beauty's prize contending, in the cave
Of Ida, came to Paris; Juno, Venus,
And Pallas, virgin progeny of Jove,
Requesting him to end their strife, and judge
Whose charms outshone her rivals. But proposing
For a reward, my beauty (if the name
Of beauty suit this inauspicious form)
And promising in marriage to bestow me
On Paris, Venus conquered: for the swain
Of Ida, leaving all his herds behind,
Expecting to receive me for his bride,
To Sparta came. But Juno, whose defeat
Fired with resentment her indignant soul,
Our nuptials frustrated; for to the arms
Of royal Priam's son, she gave not me,
But in my semblance formed a living image
Composed of ether. Paris falsely deemed
That he possessed me; from that time these ills
Have been increased by the decrees of Jove,
For he with war hath visited the realms
Of Greece, and Phrygia's miserable sons,
That he might lighten from th' unrighteous swarms
Of its inhabitants the groaning earth,
And on the bravest of the Grecian chiefs
Confer renown. While in the Phrygian war,
As the reward of their victorious arms,
I to the host of Greece have been displayed,
Though absent, save in likeness and in name.
But Mercury, receiving me in folds

Of air, and covering with a cloud (for Jove
Was not unmindful of me), in this house
Of royal Proteus, who of all mankind
Was in his judgment the most virtuous, placed me,
That undefiled I might preserve the bed
Of Menelaus. I indeed am here;
But with collected troops my hapless lord
Pursues the ravisher to Ilion's towers.
Beside Scamander's stream hath many a chief
Died in my cause; but I, who have endured
All these afflictions, am a public curse;
For 'tis supposed, that treacherous to my lord,
I have through Greece blown up the flames of war.
Why then do I prolong my life? these words
I heard from Mercury: "That I again
In Sparta, with my husband shall reside,
When he discovers that I never went
To Troy:" he therefore counselled me to keep
A spotless chastity. While Proteus viewed
The solar beams, I from the nuptial yoke
Still lived exempt; but since the darksome grave
Hath covered his remains, the royal son
Of the deceased solicits me to wed him:
But honouring my first husband, at this tomb
Of Proteus, I a suppliant kneel, to him,
To him I sue, to guard my nuptial couch,
That if through Greece I bear a name assailed
By foul aspersions, no unseemly deed
May cover me with real infamy.

TEUCER, HELEN

Teucer.—Who rules this fortress? such a splendid dome
With royal porticos and blazoned roofs
Seems worthy of a Plutus for its lord.
But, O ye gods, what vision! I behold
That hateful woman who hath ruined me,
And all the Greeks. Heaven's vengeance on thy head!
Such a resemblance bear'st thou to that Helen,
That if I were not in a foreign land,
I with this stone would smite thee: thou shouldst bleed
For being like Jove's daughter.
Helen.— Wretched man,
Whoe'er you are, why do you hate me thus
Because of her misfortunes?

Teucer.— I have erred
In giving way to such unseemly rage.
All Greece abhors Jove's daughter. But forgive me
O woman, for the words which I have uttered.
Helen.—Say who you are, and from what land you come?
Teucer.—One of that miserable race the Greeks.
Helen.—No wonder is it then, if you detest
The Spartan Helen. But to me declare,
Who are you, whence, and from what father sprung?
Teucer.—My name is Teucer, Telamon my sire;
The land which nurtured me is Salamis.
Helen.—But wherefore do you wander o'er these meads
Laved by the Nile?
Teucer.— I from my native land
Am banished.
Helen.— You, alas! must needs be wretched.
Who drove you thence?
Teucer.— My father Telamon.
What friend canst thou hold dearer?
Helen.— For what cause
Were you to exile doomed? your situation
Is most calamitous.
Teucer.— My brother Ajax,
Who died at Troy, was author of my ruin.
Helen.—How? by your sword deprived of life?
Teucer.— He fell,
On his own blade, and perished.
Helen.— Was he mad?
Who could act thus whose intellects are sound?
Teucer.—Know'st thou Achilles, Peleus' son?
Helen.— He erst,
I heard, to Helen as a suitor came.
Teucer.—He, at his death, his comrades left to strive
Which should obtain his arms.
Helen.— But why was this
Hurtful to Ajax?
Teucer.— When another won
Those arms, he gave up life.
Helen.— Do your afflictions
Rise from his fate?
Teucer.— Because I died not with him.
Helen.—O stranger, went you then to Troy's famed city?
Teucer.—And having shared in laying waste its bulwarks,
I also perished.
Helen.— Have the flames consumed,

And utterly destroyed them?
Teucer.— Not a trace
Of those proud walls is now to be discerned.
Helen.—Through thee, O Helen, do the Phrygians perish.
Teucer.—The Greeks too: for most grievous are the mischiefs
Which have been wrought.
Helen.— What length of time's elapsed
Since Troy was sacked?
Teucer.— Seven times the fruitful year
Hath almost turned around her lingering wheel.
Helen.—But how much longer did your host remain
Before those bulwarks?
Teucer.— Many a tedious moon;
There full ten years were spent.
Helen.— And have ye taken
That Spartan dame?
Teucer.— By her dishevelled hair,
Th' adult'ress, Menelaus dragged away.
Helen.—Did you behold that object of distress,
Or speak you from report?
Teucer.— These eyes as clearly
Witnessed the whole, as I now view thy face.
Helen.—Be cautious, lest for her ye should mistake
Some well-formed semblance which the gods have sent.
Teucer.—Talk if thou wilt on any other subject;
No more of her.
Helen.—Believe you this opinion
To be well-grounded?
Teucer.— With these eyes I saw her,
And she e'en now is present to my soul.
Helen.—Have Menelaus and his consort reached
Their home.
Teucer.— They are not in the Argive land,
Nor on Eurotas' banks.
Helen.— Alas! alas!
The tale you have recounted, is to her
Who hears you, an event most inauspicious.
Teucer.—He and his consort, both they say are dead.
Helen.—Did not the Greeks in one large squadron sail?
Teucer.—Yes; but a storm dispersed their shattered fleet.
Helen.—Where were they, in what seas?
Teucer.— They at that time
Through the mid waves of the Ægean deep
Were passing.
Helen.— Can none tell if Menelaus

Escaped this tempest?
Teucer.— No man; but through Greece
'Tis rumoured he is dead.
Helen.— I am undone.
Is Thestius' daughter living?
Teucer.— Mean'st thou Leda?
She with the dead is numbered.
Helen.— Did the shame
Of Helen cause her wretched mother's death?
Teucer.—Around her neck, 'tis said the noble dame
Entwined the gliding noose.
Helen.— But live the sons
Of Tyndarus, or are they too now no more?
Teucer.—They are, and are not, dead; for two accounts
Are propagated.
Helen.— Which is best confirmed?
O wretched me!
Teucer.— Some say that they are gods
Under the semblance of two radiant stars.
Helen.—Well have you spoken. But what else is rumoured?
Teucer.—That on account of their lost sister's guilt
They died by their own swords. But of these themes
Enough: I wish not to renew my sorrows.
But O assist me in the great affairs
On which I to these royal mansions came,
Wishing to see the prophetess Theonoe,
And learn, from Heaven's oracular response,
How I may steer my vessel with success
To Cyprus' isle, where Phœbus hath foretold
That I shall dwell, and on the walls I rear
Bestow the name of Salamis, yet mindful
Of that dear country I have left behind.
Helen.—This will your voyage of itself explain:
But fly from these inhospitable shores,
Ere Proteus' son, the ruler of this land,
Behold you: fly, for he is absent now
Pursuing with his hounds the savage prey.
He slays each Grecian stranger who becomes
His captive: ask not why, for I am silent;
And what could it avail you to be told?
Teucer.—O woman, most discreetly hast thou spoken;
Thy kindness may the righteous gods repay!
For though thy person so resemble Helen,
Thou hast a soul unlike that worthless dame.
Perdition seize her; never may she reach

The current of Eurotas: but mayst thou,
Most generous woman, be for ever blest.

(Exit Teucer.

Helen.—Plunged as I am 'midst great and piteous woes,
How shall I frame the plaintive strain, what Muse
With tears, or doleful elegies, invoke?

ODE

I 1

Ye syrens, winged daughters of the earth,
Come and attune the sympathetic string,
Expressive now no more of mirth,
To soothe my griefs, the flute of Libya bring;
Record the tortures which this bosom rend,
And echo back my elegiac strains:
Proserpine next will I invoke, to send
Numbers adapted to her votary pains;
So shall her dark abode, while many a tear I shed,
Waft the full dirge to soothe th' illustrious dead.

CHORUS, HELEN

I 2

Near the cerulean margin of our streams
I stood, and on the tufted herbage spread
My purple vestments in those beams
Which from his noontide orb Hyperion shed,
When on a sudden from the waving reeds
I heard a plaintive and unwelcome sound
Of bitter lamentation; o'er the meads
Groans inarticulate were poured around:
Beneath the rocky cave, dear scene of past delight,
Some Naiad thus bewails Pan's hasty flight.

HELEN

II 1

Ye Grecian nymphs, whom those barbarians caught,
And from your native land reluctant bore,
The tiding which yon sailor brought
Call forth these tears; for Ilion is no more,
By him of Ida, that predicted flame

Destroyed; through me, alas! have myriads bled,
If not through me, through my detested name.
By th' ignominious noose is Leda dead
Who my imaginary guilt deplored;
And doomed by the relentless Fates in vain
To tedious wanderings, my unhappy lord
At length hath perished 'midst the billowy main:
The twin protectors of their native land,
Castor and Pollux, from all human eyes
Are vanished, they have left Eurotas' strand,
And fields, in playful strife where each young wrestler vies.

CHORUS

II 2

My royal mistress, your disastrous fate
With many a groan and fruitless tear I mourn.
I from that hour your sorrows date
When amorous Jove on snowy pinions borne,
In form a swan, by Leda was carest.
Is there an evil you have not endured?
Your mother is no more, through you unblest
Are Jove's twin sons. Nor have your vows procured
Of your dear country the enchanting sight.
A rumour too through various realms hath spread,
Caught by the envious vulgar with delight,
Assigning you to the barbarian's bed.
Amid the waves, far from the wished-for shore,
Your husband hath been buried in the main.
You shall behold your native walls no more
Nor under burnished roofs your wonted state maintain.

HELEN

III

What Phrygian artist on the top of Ide,
Or vagrant of a Grecian line,
Felled that inauspicious pine,
To frame the bark which Paris o'er the tide
Dared with barbaric oars to guide,
When to my palace, in an evil hour
Caught by beauty's magic power,
He came to seize me for his bride?
But crafty Venus, authoress of these broils,

Marched thither, leagued with death, t' annoy
Triumphant Greece and vanquished Troy,
(Wretch that I am, consumed with endless toils!)
And Juno seated on her golden throne,
Consort of thundering Jove,
Sent Hermes from the realms above,
Who found me, when I carelessly had strewn
Leaves plucked from roses in my vest,
As Minerva's votary drest;
He bore me through the paths of air
To this loathed, this dreary land,
Called Greece, and Priam's friends the strife to share,
And roused to bloody deeds each rival band;
Where Simois' current glides, my name
Hence is marked with groundless shame.

Chorus.—Your woes I know are grievous: but to bear
With tranquil mind the necessary ills
Of life, is most expedient.

Helen.— To what ills
Have I been subject, O my dear companions!
Did not my mother, as a prodigy
Which wondering mortals gaze at, bring me forth?
For neither Grecian nor barbaric dame
Till then produced an egg, in which her children
Enveloped lay, as they report, from Jove
Leda engendered. My whole life and all
That hath befallen me, but conspires to form
One series of miraculous events;
To Juno some, and to my beauty some,
Are owing. Would to Heaven, that, like a tablet
Whose picture is effaced, I could exchange
This form for one less comely, since the Greeks
Forgetting those abundant gifts showered down
By prosperous Fortune which I now possess,
Think but of what redounds not to my honour,
And still remember my ideal shame.
Whoever therefore, with one single species
Of misery is afflicted by the gods,
Although the weight of Heaven's chastising hand
Be grievous, may with fortitude endure
Such visitation: but by many woes
Am I oppressed, and first of all exposed
To slanderous tongues, although I ne'er have erred.
It were a lesser evil e'en to sin
Then he suspected falsely. Then the gods,

'Midst men of barbarous manners, placed me far
From my loved country: torn from every friend,
I languish here, to servitude consigned
Although of free born race: for 'midst barbarians
Are all enslaved but one, their haughty lord.
My fortunes had this single anchor left,
Perchance my husband might at length arrive
To snatch me from my woes; but he, alas!
Is now no more, my mother too is dead,
And I am deemed her murd'ress, though unjustly,
Yet am I branded with this foul reproach;
And she who was the glory of our house,
My daughter in the virgin state grown grey,
Still droops unwedded: my illustrious brothers,
Castor and Pollux, called the sons of Jove,
Are now no more. But I impute my death,
Crushed as I am by all these various woes,
Not to my own misdeeds, but to the power
Of adverse fortune only: this one danger
There yet remains, if at my native land
I should again arrive, they will confine me
In a close dungeon, thinking me that Helen
Who dwelt in Ilion, till she thence was borne
By Menelaus. Were my husband living,
We might have known each other, by producing
Those tokens to which none beside are privy:
But this will never be, nor can he e'er
Return in safety. To what purpose then
Do I still lengthen out this wretched being?
To what new fortunes am I still reserved?
Shall I select a husband, but to vary
My present ills, to dwell beneath the roof
Of a barbarian, at luxurious boards
With wealth abounding, seated? for the dame
Whom wedlock couples with the man she hates
Death is the best expedient. But with glory
How shall I die? the fatal noose appears
To be so base, that e'en in slaves 'tis held
Unseemly thus to perish; in the poniard
There's somewhat great and generous. But to me
Delays are useless: welcome instant death:
Into such depth of misery am I plunged.
For beauty renders other women blest,
But hath to me the source of ruin proved.

Chorus.—O Helen, whosoe'er the stranger be

Who hither came, believe not that the whole
Of what he said, is truth.
Helen.— But in plain terms
Hath he announced my dearest husband's death.
Chorus.—The false assertions which prevail, are many.
Helen.—Clear is the language in which honest Truth
Loves to express herself.
Chorus.— You are inclined
Rather to credit inauspicious tidings
Than those which are more favourable.
Helen.— By fears
Encompassed, am I hurried to despair.
Chorus.—What hospitable treatment have you found
Beneath these roofs?
Helen.— All here, except the man
Who seeks to wed me, are my friends.
Chorus.— You know
How then to act: leave this sepulchral gloom,
Helen.—What are the counsels, or the cheering words
You wish to introduce?
Chorus.— Go in, and question
The daughter of the Nereid, her who knows
All hidden truths, Theonoe, if your lord
Yet live, or view the solar beams no more:
And when you have learnt this, as suit your fortunes
Indulge your joys, or pour forth all your tears:
But ere you know aught fully, what avail
Your sorrows? therefore listen to my words;
Leaving this tomb, attend the maid: from her
Shall you know all. But why should you look farther
When truth is in these mansions to be found?
With you the doors I'll enter; we together
The royal virgin's oracles will hear.
For t'is a woman's duty to exert
Her utmost efforts in a woman's cause.
Helen.—My friends, your wholesome counsels I approve:
But enter ye these doors, that ye, within
The palace, my calamities may hear.
Chorus.—You summon her who your commands obeys
Without reluctance.
Helen.— Woeful day! ah me,
What lamentable tidings shall I hear?
Chorus.—Forbear these plaintive strains, my dearest queen,
Nor with presaging soul anticipate
Evils to come.

Helen.— What hath my wretched lord
Endured? Doth he yet view the light, the sun
Borne in his radiant chariot, and the paths
Of all the starry train? Or hath he shared
The common lot of mortals, is he plunged
Among the dead, beneath th' insatiate grave?
Chorus.—O construe what time yet may bring to pass
In the most favourable terms.
Helen.— On thee
I call to testify, and thee adjure,
Eurotas, on whose verdant margin grow
The waving reeds: O tell me, if my lord
Be dead, as fame avers.
Chorus.— Why do you utter
These incoherent ditties?
Helen.— Round my neck
The deadly noose will I entwine, or drive
With my own hand a poniard through my breast;
For I was erst the cause of bloody strife;
But now am I a victim, to appease
The wrath of those three goddesses who strove
On Ida's mount, when 'midst the stalls where fed
His lowing herds, the son of Priam waked
The sylvan reed, to celebrate my beauty.
Chorus.—Cause these averted ills, ye gods, to light
On other heads; but, O my royal mistress,
May you be happy.
Helen.— Thou, O wretched Troy,
To crimes which thou hast ne'er committed, ow'st
Thy ruin, and those horrible disasters
Thou hast endured. For as my nuptial gifts,
Hath Venus caused an intermingled stream
Of blood and tears to flow, she, griefs to griefs
And tears to tears hath added; all these sufferings
Have been the miserable Ilion's lot.
Of their brave sons the mothers were bereft
The virgin sisters of the mighty dead
Strewed their shorn tresses on Scamander's banks,
While, by repeated shrieks, victorious Greece
Her woes expressing, smote her laurelled head,
And with her nails deep furrowing tore her cheeks.
Happy Calisto, thou Arcadian nymph
Who didst ascend the couch of Jove, transformed
To a four-footed savage, far more blest
Art thou than she to whom I owe my birth:

For thou beneath the semblance of a beast,
Thy tender limbs with shaggy hide o'erspread,
And glaring with stern visage, by that change
Didst end thy griefs. She too whom Dian drove
Indignant from her choir, that hind whose horns
Were tipped with gold, the bright Titanian maid,
Daughter of Merops, to her beauty owed
That transformation: but my charms have ruined
Both Troy and the unhappy Grecian host.
(Exeunt Helen and Chorus.

MENELAUS

O Pelops, in the strife on Pisa's field,
Who didst outstrip the fiery steeds that whirled
The chariot of Oenomaus, would to Heaven
That when thy severed limbs before the gods
Were at the banquet placed, thou then thy life
Amidst the blest immortal powers hadst closed,
Ere thou my father Atreus didst beget,
Whose issue by his consort Ærope
Were Agamemnon and myself, two chiefs
Of high renown. No ostentatious words
Are these; but such a numerous host, I deem,
As that which we to Ilion's shore conveyed,
Ne'er stemmed the tide before; these troops their king
Led not by force to combat, but bore rule
O'er Grecian youths his voluntary subjects,
And among these, some heroes, now no more,
May we enumerate; others from the sea
Who 'scaped with joy, and to their homes returned,
E'en after fame had classed them with the dead.
But I, most wretched, o'er the briny waves
Of ocean wander, since I have o'erthrown
The battlements of Troy, and though I wish
Again to reach my country; by the gods
Am I esteemed unworthy of such bliss.
E'en to the Libyan deserts have I sailed,
And traversed each inhospitable scene
Of brutal outrage; still as I approach
My country, the tempestuous winds repel me,
Nor hath a prosperous breeze from Heaven yet filled
My sails, to waft me to the Spartan coast:
And now a shipwrecked, miserable man,
Reft of my friends, I on these shores am cast,
My vessel hath been shivered 'gainst the rocks

Into a thousand fragments: on the keel,
The only part which yet remains entire
Of all that fabric, scarce could I and Helen,
Whom I from Troy have borne, escape with life
Through fortunes unforeseen: but of this land
And its inhabitants, the name I know not:
For with the crowd I blushed to intermingle
Lest they my squalid garments should observe,
Through shame my wants concealing. For the man
Of an exalted station, when assailed
By adverse fortune, having never learned
How to endure calamity, is plunged
Into a state far worse than he whose woes
Have been of ancient date. But pinching need
Torments me: for I have not either food
Or raiment to protect my shivering frame,
Which may be guessed from these vile rags I wear
Cast up from my wrecked vessel: for the sea
Hath swallowed up my robes, my tissued vests,
And every ensign of my former state.
Within the dark recesses of a cave
Having concealed my wife, that guilty cause
Of all my woes, and my surviving friends
Enjoined to guard her, hither am I come.
Alone, in quest of necessary aid
For my brave comrades whom I there have left,
If by my search I haply can obtain it,
I roam; but when I viewed this house adorned
With gilded pinnacles, and gates that speak
The riches of their owner, I advanced:
For I have hopes that from this wealthy mansion
I, somewhat for my sailors, shall obtain.
But they who want the necessary comforts
Of life, although they are disposed to aid us,
Yet have not wherewithal. Ho! who comes forth
From yonder gate, my doleful tale to bear
Into the house?

FEMALE SERVANT, MENELAUS

F. Serv.—Who at the threshold stands?
Wilt thou not hence depart, lest thy appearance
Before these doors give umbrage to our lords?
Else shalt thou surely die, because thou cam'st
From Greece, whose sons shall never hence return.

Mene.—Well hast thou spoken, O thou aged dame.
Wilt thou permit me? For to thy behests
Must I submit: but suffer me to speak.
F. Serv.—Depart: for 'tis my duty to permit
No Greek to enter this imperial dome.
Mene.—Lift not thy hand against me, nor attempt
To drive me hence by force.
F. Serv.— Thou wilt not yield
To my advice, thou therefore art to blame.
Mene.—Carry my message to thy lords within.
F. Serv.—I fear lest somewhat dreadful might ensue
Should I repeat your words.
Mene.— I hither come
A shipwrecked man, a stranger, one of those
Whom all hold sacred.
F. Serv.— To some other house,
Instead of this, repair.
Mene.— I am determined
To enter: but comply with my request.
F. Serv.—Be well assured thou are unwelcome here,
And shalt ere long by force be driven away.
Mene.—Alas! alas! where are my valiant troops?
F. Serv.—Elsewhere, perhaps, thou wert a mighty man;
But here art thou no longer such.
Mene.— O Fortune,
How am I galled with undeserved reproach!
F. Serv.—Why are those eyelids moist with tears, why griev'st thou?
Mene.—Because I once was happy.
F. Serv.— Then depart,
And mingle social tears with those thou lov'st.
Mene.—But what domain is this, to whom belong
These royal mansions?
F. Serv.— Proteus here resides;
This land is Egypt.
Mene.— Egypt? wretched me!
Ah, whither have I sailed!
F. Serv.— But for what cause
Scorn'st thou the race of Nile?
Mene.— I scorn them not:
My own disastrous fortunes I bewail.
F. Serv.—Many are wretched, thou in this respect
Art nothing singular.
Mene.— Is he, the king
Thou speak'st of, here within?

F. Serv.— To him belongs
This tomb; his son is ruler of this land.
Mene.—But where is he: abroad, or in the palace?
F. Serv.—He's not within: but to the Greeks he bears
The greatest enmity.
Mene.— Whence rose this hate,
Productive of such bitter fruits to me?
F. Serv.—Beneath these roofs Jove's daughter Helen dwells.
Mene.—What mean'st thou? Ha! what words with wonder fraught
Are these which thou hast uttered? O repeat them.
F. Serv.—The child of Tyndarus, she who in the realm
Of Sparta erst abode.
Mene.— When came she hither?
How can this be?
F. Serv.—From Lacedæmon's realm.
Mene.—When? Hath my wife been torn from yonder cave?
F. Serv.—Before the Greeks, O stranger, went to Troy.
Retreat then from these mansions, for within
Hath happened a calamitous event,
By which the palace is disturbed. Thou com'st
Unseasonably, and if the king surprise thee,
Instead of hospitable treatment, death
Must be thy portion. To befriend the Greeks
Though well inclined, yet thee have I received
With these harsh words, because I fear the monarch.
(Exit Female servant.
Mene.—What shall I say? For I, alas! am told
Of present sorrows added to the past.
Come I not hither, after having borne
From vanquished Troy my consort, whom I left
Within yon cave well guarded? Yet here dwells
Another Helen, whom that woman called
Jove's daughter. Lives there on the banks of Nile
A man who bears the sacred name of Jove?
For in the heavens there's only one. What country,
But that where glides Eurotas' stream beset
With waving reeds, is Sparta? Tyndarus' name
Suits him alone. Bnt is there any land
Synonymous with Lacedæmon's realm,
And that of Troy? I know not how to solve
This doubt; for there are many, it appears,
In various regions of the world, who bear
Like appellations; city corresponds
With city; woman borrows that of woman:

Nor must we therefore wonder. Yet again
Here will I stay, though danger be announced
By yonder aged servant at the door:
For there is no man so devoid of pity
As not to give me food, when he the name
Of Menelaus hears. That dreadful fire
By which the Phrygian bulwarks were consumed
Is memorable, and I who kindled it
Am known in every land. I'll therefore wait
Until the master of this house return.
But I have two expedients, and will practise
That which my safety shall require; of soul
Obdurate, if he prove, in my wrecked bark
Can I conceal myself, but if the semblance
Which he puts on, be mild, I for relief
From these my present miseries, will apply.
But this of all the woes that I endure
Is the most grievous, that from other kings
I, though a king myself, should be reduced
To beg my food: but thus hath Fate ordained.
Nor is it my assertion, but a maxim
Among the wise established, that there's nought
More powerful than the dread behests of Fate.

HELEN, CHORUS, MENELAUS

Chorus.—I heard what yon prophetic maid foretold,
Who in the palace did unfold
The oracles; that to the shades profound
Of Erebus, beneath the ground
Interred, not yet hath Menelaus ta'en
His passage: on the stormy main
Still tossed, he cannot yet approach the strand,
The haven of the Spartan land:
The chief, who now his vagrant life bewails,
Without a friend, unfurls his sails,
From Ilion's realm to every distant shore
Borne o'er the deep with luckless oar.
Helen.—I to this hallowed tomb again repair,
Now I have heard the grateful tidings uttered
By sage Theonoe, who distinctly knows
All that hath happened? for she says my lord
Is living, and yet views the solar beams:
But after passing o'er unnumbered straits
Of ocean, to a vagrant's wretched life

Full long inured, on these Ægptian coasts,
When he his toils hath finished, shall arrive.
Yet there is one thing more, which she hath left
Unmentioned, whether he shall come with safety.
This question I neglected to propose,
O'erjoyed when she informed me he yet lives;
She also adds, that he is near the land,
From his wrecked ship, with his few friends, cast forth,
O mayst thou come at length; for ever dear
To me wilt thou arrive. Ha! who is that?
Am not I caught, through some deceitful scheme
Of Proteus' impious son, in hidden snares?
Like a swift courser, or the madding priestess
Of Bacchus, shall I not with hasty step
Enter the tomb, because his looks are fierce
Who rushes on, and strives to overtake me?

Mene.—On thee I call, who to the yawning trench
Around that tomb, and blazing altars hiest
Precipitate. Stay: wherefore dost thou fly?
With what amazement doth thy presence strike
And almost leave me speechless!

Helen.— O my friends,
I suffer violence; for from the tomb
I by this man am dragged, who to the king
Will give me, from whose nuptial couch I fled.

Mene.—We are no pirates, nor the ministers
Of lustful villany.

Helen.— Yet is the vest
You wear unseemly.

Mene.— Stay thy rapid flight.
Dismiss thy fears.

Helen.— I stop, now I have reached
This hallowed spot.

Mene.— Say, woman, who thou art;
What face do I behold?

Helen.— But who are you?
For I by the same reasons am induced
To ask this question.

Mene.— Never did I see
A greater likeness.

Helen.— O ye righteous gods!
For 'tis a privilege the gods alone
Confer, to recognize our long-lost friends.

Mene.—Art thou a Grecian or a foreign dame?

Helen.—Of Greece: but earnestly I wish to know
Whence you derive your origin.
Mene.— In thee
A wonderful resemblance I discern
Of Helen.
Helen— Menelaus' very features
These eyes in you behold, still at a loss
Am I for words t' express my thoughts.
Mene.— Full clearly
Hast thou discovered a most wretched man.
Helen.—O to thy consort's arms at length restored!
Mene.—To what a consort? O forbear to touch
My garment!
Helen.— E'en the same, whom to your arms,
A noble bride, my father Tyndarus gave.
Mene.—Send forth, O Hecate, thou orb of light,
Some more benignant spectre.
Helen.— You in me
Behold not one of those who minister
At Hecate's abhorred nocturnal rites.
Mene.—Nor am I sure the husband of two wives.
Helen.—Say, to whom else in wedlock are you joined?
Mene.—To her who lies concealed in yonder cave,
The prize I hither bring from vanquished Troy.
Helen.—You have no wife but me.
Mene.— If I retain
My reason yet, these eyes are sure deceived.
Helen—Seem you not then, while me you thus behold,
To view your real consort?
Mene.— Though your person
Resemble hers, no positive decision
Can I presume to form.
Helen.— Observe me well,
And mark wherein we differ. Who can judge
With greater certainty than you?
Mene.— Thou bear'st
Her semblance, I confess.
Helen.— Who can inform you
Better than your own eyes?
Mene.— What makes me doubt
Is this; because I have another wife.
Helen.—To the domains of Troy I never went:
It was my image only.
Mene.— Who can fashion
Such bodies, with the power of sight endued?

Helen.—Composed of ether, you a consort have,
Heaven's workmanship.
Mene.— Wrought by what plastic god?
For the events thou speak'st of are most wondrous.
Helen.—Lest Paris should obtain me, this exchange
Was made by Juno.
Mene.— How couldst thou be here,
At the same time, and in the Phrygian realm?
Helen.—The name, but not the body, can be present
At once in many places.
Mene.— O release me;
For I came hither in an evil hour.
Helen.—Will you then leave me here, and bear away
That shadow of a wife?
Mene.— Yet, O farewell,
Because thou art like Helen.
Helen.— I'm undone:
For though my husband I again have found,
Yet shall not I possess him.
Mene.— My conviction,
From all those grievous toils I have endured
At Ilion, I derive, and not from thee.
Helen.—Ah, who is there more miserable than I am?
My dearest friends desert me: I, to Greece,
To my dear native land, shall ne'er return.

MESSENGER, MENELAUS, HELEN, CHORUS

Mess.—After a tedious search, O Menelaus,
At length have I with difficulty found you,
But not till over all the wide extent
Of this barbaric region I had wandered;
Sent by the comrades whom you left behind.
Mene.—Have ye been plundered then by the barbarians?
Mess.—A most miraculous event hath happened,
Yet less astonishing by far in name
Than in reality.
Mene.— Speak, for thou bring'st
Important tidings by this breathless haste.
Mess.—My words are these: in vain have you endured
Unnumbered toils.
Mene.— Those thou bewail'st are ills
Of ancient date. But what hast thou to tell me?
Mess.—Borne to the skies your consort from our sight
Hath vanished, in the heavens is she concealed,

Leaving the cave in which we guarded her,
When she these words had uttered: "O ye sons
Of hapless Phrygia, and of Greece: for me
Beside Scamander's conscious stream ye died,
Through Juno's arts, because ye falsely deemed
Helen by Phrygian Paris was possest:
But after having here remained on earth
My stated time, observing the decrees
Of Fate, I to my sire the liquid ether
Return: but Tyndarus' miserable daughter,
Though guiltless, hath unjustly been accused."
Daughter of Leda hail! wert thou then here?
While I as if thou to the starry paths
Hadst mounted, through my ignorance proclaimed
Thou from this world on rapid wings wert borne.
But I no longer will allow thee thus
To sport with the afflictions of thy friends;
For in thy cause thy lord and his brave troops
On Ilion's coast already have endured
Abundant toils.

Mene. — These are the very words
She uttered; and by what ye both aver
The truth is ascertained. O happy day
Which gives thee to my arms!

Helen.— My dearest lord,
O Menelaus, it is long indeed
Since I have seen you: but joy comes at last.
My friends, transported I receive my lord
Whom I once more with these fond arms enfold,
After the radiant chariot of the sun
Hath oft the world illumined.

Mene.— I embrace
Thee too: but having now so much to say
I know not with what subject to begin.

Helen.—Joy raises my exulting crest, these tears
Are tears of ecstasy, around your neck
My arms I fling with transport, O my husband,
O sight most wished for!

Mene.— I acquit the Fates,
Since Jove's and Leda's daughter I possess,
On whom her brothers borne on milk-white steeds
Erst showered abundant blessings, when the torch
Was kindled at our jocund nuptial rite;
Though from my palace her the gods conveyed.
But evil now converted into good

To me thy husband hath at length restored
My long-lost consort: grant, O bounteous Heaven,
That I these gifts of fortune may enjoy.
Helen.—May you enjoy them, for my vows concur
With yours; nor, of us two, can one be wretched
Without the other. O my friends, I groan
No longer, I no longer shed the tear
For my past woes: my husband I possess
Whom I from Troy expected to return
Full many, many years.
Mene.— I still am thine,
And thee with these fond arms again enfold.
But oft the chariot of the sun revolved
Through his diurnal orbit, ere the frauds
Of Juno I discerned. Yet more from joy
Than from affliction rise the tears I shed.
Helen.—What shall I say? what mortal could presume
E'er to have hoped for such a blest event?
An unexpected visitant once more
I clasp you to my bosom.
Mene.— And I thee
Who didst appear to sail for Ida's town,
And Ilion's wretched turrets. By the gods,
Inform me, I conjure thee, by what means
Thou from my palace hither wert conveyed.
Helen.—Alas! you to the source of all my woes
Ascend, and search into most bitter tidings.
Mene.—Speak: for whate'er hath been ordained by Heaven
Ought to be published.
Helen.— I abhor the topic
On which I now am entering.
Mene.— Yet relate
All that thou know'st; for pleasing 'tis to hear
Of labours that are past.
Helen.— I never went
To that barbarian youth's adulterous couch
By the swift oar impelled: but winged love
Those hapless spousals formed.
Mene.— What god, what fate,
Hath torn thee from thy country?
Helen.— O my lord,
The son of Jove hath placed me on the banks
Of Nile.
Mene.—With what amazement do I hear
This wondrous tale of thy celestial guide!

Helen—Oft have I wept, and still the tear bedews
These eyes: to Juno, wife of Jove, I owe
My ruin.
Mene.—Wherefore wished she to have heaped
Mischiefs on thee?
Helen.— Ye sources of whate'er
To me hath been most dreadful, O ye baths
And fountains, where those goddesses adorned
Their rival beauties, from whose influence rose
That judgment!
Mene.— Were those curses on thy hand
By Juno showered, that judgment to requite?
Helen.—To rescue me from Venus.
Mene.— What thou mean'st
Inform me.
Helen.— Who to Paris had engaged——
Mene.—O wretched woman!
Helen.— Wretched, wretched me!
Thus did she waft me to th' Egyptian coast.
Mene.—Then in thy stead to him that image gave,
As thou inform'st me.
Helen.— But alas! what woes
Thence visited our wretched house! ah mother!
Ah me!
Mene.—What sayst thou?
Helen.— Leda is no more.
Around her neck she fixed the deadly noose
On my account, through my unhappy nuptials
O'erwhelmed with foul disgrace.
Mene.— Alas! But lives
Hermione our daughter?
Helen.— Yet unwedded,
Yet childless, O my husband, she bewails
My miserable 'spousals, my disgrace.
Mene.—O Paris, who hast utterly o'erthrown
All my devoted house, these curst events,
Both thee, and myriads of the Grecian troops
With brazen arms refulgent, have destroyed,
Helen.—But from my country in an evil hour,
From my loved native city, and from you,
Me hath the goddess driven, a wretch accursed
In that I left our home, and bridal bed,
Which yet I left not, for those base espousals.
Chorus.—If ye hereafter meet with happier fortune,

This may atone for all ye have endured
Already.
Mess.—To me too, O Menelaus,
Communicate a portion of that joy
Which I perceive, but know not whence it springs.
Mene.—Thou too, old man, shalt in our conference share.
Mess.—Was not she then the cause of all the woes
Endured at Troy?
Mene.— Not she: we were deceived
By those immortal Powers, whose plastic hand
Moulded a cloud into that baleful image.
Mess.—What words are these you utter? have we toiled
In vain, and only for an empty cloud?
Mene.—These deeds were wrought by Juno, and the strife
'Twixt the three goddesses.
Mess.— But is this woman
Indeed your wife?
Mene.— E'en she: and thou for this
On my assertion safely mayst depend.
Mess.—My daughter, O how variable is Jove,
And how inscrutable! for he with ease
Whirls us around, now here, now there; one suffers
Full many toils; another, who ne'er knew
What sorrow was, is swallowed up at once
In swift perdition, nor in Fortune's gifts
A firm and lasting tenure doth enjoy.
Thou and thy husband have endured a war,
Of slander thou, but he of pointed spears:
For by the tedious labours he endured
He nothing could obtain, but now obtains
The greatest and the happiest of all boons,
Which comes to him unsought. Thou hast not shamed
Thy aged father, and the sons of Jove,
Nor acted as malignant rumour speaks.
I now renew thy hymeneal rite,
And still am mindful of the torch I bore,
Running before the steeds, when in a car
Thou with this favoured bridegroom wert conveyed
From thy paternal mansion's happy gates.
For worthless is that servant who neglects
His master's interests, nor partakes their joys,
Nor feels for their afflictions. I was born
Indeed a slave, yet I with generous slaves
Would still be numbered, for although the name
I bear is abject, yet my soul is free.

Far better this, than if I had at once
Suffered two evils, a corrupted heart,
And vile subjection to another's will.

Mene.—Courage, old man: for thou hast borne my shield,
And in my cause endured unnumbered toils,
Sharing my dangers: now partake my joys;
Go tell the friends I left, what thou hast seen,
And our auspicious fortunes: on the shore
Bid them remain, till our expected conflict
Is finished; and observe how we may sail
From this loathed coast; that, with our better fortune
Conspiring, we, if possible, may 'scape
From these barbarians.

Mess.— Your commands, O king,
Shall be obeyed. But I perceive how vain
And how replete with falsehood is the voice
Of prophets: no dependence can be placed
Upon the flames that from the altar rise,
Or on the voice of the feathered choir.
It is the height of folly to suppose
That birds are able to instruct mankind.
For calchas, to the host, nor by his words
Nor signs, declared, "I for a cloud behold
My friends in battle slain." The seer was mute,
And Troy in vain was taken. But perhaps
You will rejoin, "'Twas not the will of Heaven
That he should speak." Why then do we consult
These prophets? We by sacrifice should ask
For blessings from the gods and lay aside
All auguries. This vain delusive bait
Was but invented to beguile mankind.
No sluggard e'er grew rich by divination,
The best of seers are Prudence and Discernment.
(Exit Messenger.

Chorus.—My sentiments on prophets well accord
With those of this old man. He whom the gods
Th' immortal gods befriend, in his own house
Hath a response that never can mislead.

Helen.—So be it. All thus far is well. But how
You came with safety, O unhappy man,
From Troy, 'twill nought avail for me to know;
Yet with the sorrows of their friends, have friends
A wish to be acquainted.

Mene.— Thou hast asked
A multitude of questions in one short

And blended sentence. Why should I recount
To thee our sufferings on the Ægean deep,
Those treacherous beacons, by the vengeful hand
Of Nauplius kindled on Eubœa's rocks,
The towns of Crete, or in the Libyan realm,
Which I have visited, and the famed heights
Of Perseus? never could my words assuage
Thy curiosity, and, by repeating
My woes to thee, I should but grieve the more,
And yet a second time those sufferings feel.

Helen.—You in your answer have been more discreet
Than I who such a question did propose.
But pass o'er all beside, and only tell me
How long you wandered o'er the briny main.

Mene.—Year after year, besides the ten at Troy,
Seven tedious revolutions of the sun.

Helen.—The time you speak of, O unhappy man,
Is long indeed: but from those dangers saved
You hither come to bleed.

Mene.— What words are these?
What dost thou mean? O, how hast thou undone me.

Helen.—Fly from these regions with your utmost speed:
Or he to whom this house belongs will slay you.

Mene.—What have I done that merits such a fate?

Helen.—You hither come an unexpected guest,
And are a hindrance to my bridal rite.

Mene.—Is there a man then who presumes to wed
My consort?

Helen.— And with arrogance to treat me,
Which I, alas! have hitherto endured.

Mene.—Of private rank, in his own strength alone
Doth he confide, or rules he o'er the land?

Helen.—Lord of this region, royal Proteus' son.

Mene.—This is the very riddle which I heard
From yonder female servant.

Helen.— At which gate
Of this barbarian palace did you stand?

Mene.—Here, whence I like a beggar was repelled.

Helen.—What, did you beg for food! ah wretched me!

Mene.—The fact was thus: though I that abject name
Assumed not.

Helen.— You then know, it seems, the whole
About my nuptials.

Mene.— This I know: but whether
Thou has escaped th' embraces of the king

I still am uninformed.
Helen.— That I have kept
Your bed still spotless, may you rest assured.
Mene.—How canst thou prove the fact? if thou speak truth
To me, it will give pleasure.
Helen.— Do you see,
Close to the tomb, my miserable seat?
Mene.—I on the ground behold a couch: but what
Hast thou to do with that, O wretched woman?
Helen.—Here I a suppliant bowed, that I might 'scape
From those espousals.
Mene.— Couldst thou find no altar,
Or dost thou follow the barbarian mode?
Helen.—Equally with the temples of the gods
Will this protect me.
Mene.— Is not then my bark
Allowed to waft thee to the Spartan shore?
Helen.—Rather the sword than Helen's bridal bed
Awaits you.
Mene.— Thus should I of all mankind
Be the most wretched.
Helen.— Let not shame prevent
Your 'scaping from this land.
Mene.— And leaving thee,
For whom I laid the walls of Ilion waste?
Helen.—'Twere better than to perish in the cause
Of me your consort.
Mene.— Such unmanly deeds
As these thou speak'st of would disgrace the chief
Who conquered Troy.
Helen.— You cannot slay the king,
Which is perhaps the project you have formed.
Mene.—Hath he then such a body as no steel
Can penetrate?
Helen.— My reasons you shall know.
But it becomes not a wise man t' attempt
What cannot be performed.
Mene.— Shall I submit
My hands in silence to the galling chain?
Helen.—You know not how to act in these dire straits
To which we are reduced: but of some plot
Must we avail ourselves.
Mene.— 'Twere best to die
In some brave action than without a conflict.
Helen—One only hope of safety yet remains.

Mene.—By gold can it be purchased, or depends it
On dauntless courage, or persuasive words?
Helen.—Of your arrival if the monarch hear not.
Mene.—Who can inform him? he will never sure
Know who I am.
Helen.— He hath a sure associate,
Within his palace, equal to the gods.
Mene.—Some voice which from its inmost chambers sounds?
Helen.—No: 'tis his sister, her they call Theonoe.
Mene.—She bears indeed a most prophetic name;
But say, what mighty deeds can she perform?
Helen.—All things she knows, and will inform her brother
That you are here.
Mene.— We both, alas! must die,
Nor can I possibly conceal myself.
Helen.—Could our united supplications move her?
Mene.—To what action? Into what vain hope
Wouldst thou mislead me?
Helen.— Not to tell her brother
That you are in the land.
Mene.— If we prevail
Thus far, can we escape from these domains?
Helen.—With ease, if she concur in our design,
But not without her knowledge.
Mene.— This depends
On thee: for woman best prevails with woman.
Helen.—Around her knees these suppliant hands I'll twine.
Mene.—Go then; but what if she reject our prayer?
Helen.—You certainly must die; and I by force
Shall to the king be wedded.
Mene.— Thou betray'st me
That force thou talk'st of is but mere pretence.
Helen.—But by your head that sacred oath I swear.
Mene.—What sayst thou, wilt thou die, and never change
Thy husband?
Helen.— By the self-same sword: my corse
Shall lie beside you.
Mene.— To confirm the word
Which thou hast spoken, take my hand.
Helen.— I take
Your hand, and swear that after you are dead
I will not live.
Mene.— And I will put an end
To my existence, if deprived of thee.

Helen.—But how shall we die so as to procure
Immortal glory?
Mene. Soon as on the tomb
Thee I have slain, myself will I destroy.
But first a mighty conflict shall decide
Our claims who to thy bridal bed aspire.
Let him who dares, draw near: for the renown
I won at Troy, I never will belie,
Nor yet returning to the Grecian shore
Suffer unnumbered taunts for having reft
Thetis of her Achilles, and beheld
Ajax the Telamonian hero slain,
With Neleus' grandson, though I dare not bleed
To save my consort. Yet on thy behalf
Without regret, will I surrender up
This fleeting life: for if the gods are wise
They lightly scatter dust upon the tomb
Of the brave man who by his foes is slain,
But pile whole mountains on the coward's breast.
Chorus.—O may the race of Tantalus, ye gods,
At length be prosperous, may their sorrows cease!
Helen.—Wretch that I am! for such is my hard fate:
O Menelaus, we are lost for ever.
The prophetess Theonoe, from the palace
Comes forth: I hear the sounding gates unbarred.
Fly from this spot. But whither can you fly?
For your arrival here, full well she knows,
Absent, or present. How, O wretched me,
Am I undone! in safety you return
From Troy, from a barbarian land, to rush
Again upon the swords of fresh barbarians.

THEONOE, MENELAUS, HELEN, CHORUS

Theonoe (to one of her Attendants).
Lead thou the way, sustaining in thy hand
The kindled torch, and fan the ambient air,
Observing every due and solemn rite,
That we may breathe the purest gales of Heaven.
Meanwhile do thou, if any impious foot
Have marked the path, with lustral flames efface
The taint, and wave the pitchy brand around,
That I may pass; and when we have performed
Our duteous homage to th' immortal powers,
Into the palace let the flame be borne,

Restore it to the Lares. What opinion
Have you, O Helen, of th' events foretold
By my prophetic voice? Your husband comes,
Your Menelaus in this land appears,
Reft of his ships, and of your image reft.
'Scaped from what dangers, O unhappy man,
Art thou arrived, although thou know'st not yet
Whether thou e'er shalt to thy home return,
Or here remain. For there is strife in Heaven:
And Jove on thy account this day will hold
A council; Juno who was erst thy foe,
Now grown benignant, with thy consort safe
To Sparta would convey thee, that all Greece
May understand that the fictitious nuptials
Of Paris, were the baleful gift of Venus.
But Venus wants to frustrate thy return,
Lest she should be convicted, or appear
At least the palm of beauty to have purchased
By vending Helen for a wife to Paris.
But this important question to decide,
On me depends; I either can destroy thee,
Which is the wish of Venus, by informing
My brother thou art here; or save thy life
By taking Juno's side, and thy arrival
Concealing from my brother, who enjoined me
To inform him whensoe'er thou on these shores
Shouldst land. Who bears the tidings to my brother.
That Menelaus' self is here, to save me
From his resentment?

Helen.— At thy knees I fall,
O virgin, as a suppliant, and here take
My miserable seat, both for myself,
And him whom, scarce restored to me, I see
Now on the verge of death. Forbear t' inform
Thy brother, that to these fond arms my lord
Again is come. O save him, I implore thee;
Nor gratify thy brother, by betraying
The feelings of humanity, to purchase
A wicked and unjust applause: for Jove
Detests all violence, he bids us use
What we possess, but not increase our stores
By rapine. It is better to be poor,
Than gain unrighteous wealth. For all mankind
Enjoy these common blessings, Air and Earth;
Nor ought we our own house with gold to fill.

By keeping fraudfully another's right,
Or seizing it by violence. For Hermes,
Commissioned by the blest immortal powers,
Hath, at my cost, consigned me to thy sire,
To keep me for this husband, who is here
And claims me back again: but by what means
Can he receive me after he is dead?
Or how can the Ægyptian king restore me
A living consort to my breathless lord?
Consider therefore, both the will of Heaven
And that of thy great father. Would the god,
Would the deceased, surrender up or keep
Another's right? I deem they would restore it.
Hence to thy foolish brother shouldst not thou
Pay more respect than to thy virtuous sire.
And sure if thou, a prophetess, who utter'st
Th' oracular responses of the gods,
Break'st through thy father's justice, to comply
With an unrighteous brother: it were base
In thee to understand each mystic truth
Revealed by the immortal powers, the things
That are, and those that are not; yet o'erlook
The rules of justice. But O stoop to save
Me, miserable me, from all those ills
In which I am involved; this great exertion
Of thy benignant aid, my fortunes claim.
For there is no man who abhors not Helen;
'Tis rumoured through all Greece that I betrayed
My husband, and abode beneath the roofs
Of wealthy Phrygia. But to Greece once more
Should I return and to the Spartan realm;
When they are told, and see, how to the arts
Of these contending goddesses they owe
Their ruin; but that I have to my friends
Been ever true, they to the rank I held
'Midst chaste and virtuous matrons, will restore me:
My daughter too, whom no man dares to wed,
From me her bridal portion shall receive;
And I, no longer doomed to lead the life
Of an unhappy vagrant, shall enjoy
The treasures that our palaces contain.
Had Menelaus died, and been consumed
In the funeral pyre, I should have wept
For him far distant in a foreign realm;
But now shall I for ever be bereft

Of him who lives, and seem to have escaped
From every danger. Virgin, act not thus;
To thee I kneel a suppliant; O confer
On me this boon, and emulate the justice
Of your great sire. For fair renown attends
The children, from a virtuous father sprung,
Who equal their hereditary worth.

Theonoe.—Most piteous are the words which you have spoken;
You also claim my pity: but I wish
To hear what Menelaus yet can plead
To save his life

Mene.— I cannot at your knees
Fall prostrate, or with tears these eyelids stain:
For I should cover all the great exploits
Which I achieved at Ilion with disgrace,
If I became a dastard; though some hold
'Tis not unworthy of the brave to weep
When wretched. But this honourable part
(If such a part can e'er be honourable)
I will not act, because the prosperous fortunes
Which erst were mine, are present to my soul.
If then you haply are disposed to save
A foreigner who justly claims his wife,
Restore her, and protect us: if you spurn
Our suit, I am not now for the first time,
But have been often wretched, and your name
Shall be recorded as an impious woman.
These thoughts, which I hold worthy of myself,
And just, and such as greatly must affect
Your inmost heart, I at your father's tomb
With energy will utter. Good old man,
Beneath this marble sepulchre who dwell'st,
To thee I sue, restore my wife, whom Jove
Sent hither to thy realm, that thou for me
Might'st guard her. Thou, I know, since thou are dead,
Canst ne'er have power to give her back again:
But she, this holy priestess, will not suffer
Reproach to fall on her illustrious sire,
Whom I invoke amid the shades beneath:
For this depends on her. Thee too I call,
O Pluto, to my aid, who hast received
Full many a corse, which fell in Helen's cause
Beneath my sword, and still retain'st the prize:
Either restore them now to life, or force
Her who seems mightier than her pious father,

To give me back my wife. But of my consort
If ye resolve to rob me, I will urge
Those arguments which Helen hath omitted.
Know then, O virgin, first I by an oath
Have bound myself, your brother to encounter,
And he, or I, must perish; the plain truth
Is this. But foot to foot in equal combat,
If he refuse to meet me, and attempt
To drive us suppliants from the tomb by famine,
My consort will I slay, and with the sword
Here on this sepulchre my bosom pierce,
That the warm current of our blood may stream
Into the grave. Thus shall our corses lie
Close to each other on this polished marble:
To you eternal sorrow shall they cause,
And foul reproach to your great father's name.
For neither shall your brother wed my Helen,
Nor any man beside: for I with me
Will bear her; if I cannot bear her home,
Yet will I bear her to the shades beneath.
But why complain? If I shed tears, and act
The woman's part, I rather shall become
An object of compassion, than deserve
To be esteemed a warrior. If you list,
Slay me, for I can never fall inglorious.
But rather yield due credence to my words,
So will you act with justice, and my wife
Shall I recover.

Chorus. To decide the cause
On which we speak, belongs to thee, O virgin:
But so decide as to please all.

Theonoe. By nature
And inclination am I formed to act
With piety, myself too I revere:
Nor will I e'er pollute my sire's renown,
Or gratify my brother by such means
As might make me seem base. For from my birth,
Hath justice in this bosom fixed her shrine:
And since from Nereus I inherited
This temper, Menelaus will I strive
To save. But now since Juno is disposed
To be your friend, with her will I accord:
May Venus be propitious, though her rites
I never have partaken, and will strive
For ever to remain a spotless maid.

But I concur with thee, O Menelaus,
In all thou to my father at his tomb
Hast said: for with injustice should I act
If I restored not Helen: had he lived,
My sire on thee again would have bestowed
Thy consort, and her former lord on Helen.
For vengeance, in the shades of Hell beneath,
And among all that breathe the vital air,
Attends on those who break their plighted trust.
The soul of the deceased, although it live
Indeed no longer, yet doth still retain
A consciousness which lasts for ever, lodged
In the eternal scene of its abode,
The liquid ether. To express myself
Concisely, all that you requested me
Will I conceal, nor with my counsels aid
My brother's folly; I to him shall show
A real friendship, though without the semblance,
If I his vicious manners can reform
And make him more religious. Therefore find
Means to escape yourselves; for I will hence
Depart in silence. First implore the gods;
To Venus sue, that she your safe return
Would suffer; and to Juno, not to change
The schemes which she hath formed, both to preserve
Your lord and you. O my departed sire,
For thee will I exert my utmost might,
That on thy honoured name no foul reproach
May ever rest. (Exit Theonoe.

Chorus. No impious man e'er prospered:
But fairest hopes attend an honest cause.

Helen.—O Menelaus, as to what depends
Upon the royal maid, are we secure:
But next doth it become you to propose
Some means our safety to effect.

Mene.— Now listen
To me; thou in this palace long hast dwelt,
An inmate with the servants of the king.

Helen.—Why speak you thus? for you raise hopes as though
You could do somewhat for our common good.

Mene.—Canst thou prevail on any one of those
Who guide the harnessed steeds, to furnish us
With a swift car?

Helen.— Perhaps I might succeed
In that attempt. But how shall we escape

Who to these fields and this barbarian land
Are strangers? An impracticable thing
Is this you speak of.
Mene.— Well, but in the palace
Concealed, if with this sword the king I slay.
Helen—His sister will not suffer this in silence
If you attempt aught 'gainst her brother's life.
Mene.—We have no ship in which we can escape;
For that which we brought hither, by the waves
Is swallowed up.
Helen.— Now hear what I propose;
From woman's lips if wisdom ever flow.
Will you permit a rumour of your death
To be dispersed?
Mene.— This were an evil omen:
But I, if any benefit arise
From such report, consent to be called dead
While I yet live.
Helen.— That impious tyrant's pity
Our female choir shall move, with tresses shorn,
And chaunt funereal strains.
Mene.— What tendency
Can such a project have to our deliverance?
Helen.—I will allege that 'tis an ancient custom;
And of the monarch his permission crave,
That I on you, as if you in the sea
Had perished, may bestow a vacant tomb.
Mene.—If he consent, how can this feigned interment
Enable us to fly without a ship?
Helen.—I will command a bark to be prepared,
From whence into the bosom of the deep
Funereal trappings I may cast.
Mene. How well
And wisely hast thou spoken! but the tomb
If he direct thee on the strand to raise,
Nought can this scheme avail.
Helen.— But I will say
'Tis not the usage, in a Grecian realm,
With earth to cover the remains of those
Who perished in the waves
Mene.— Thou hast again
Removed this obstacle: I then with thee
Will sail, and the funereal trappings place
In the same vessel.
Helen.— 'Tis of great importance

That you, and all those mariners who 'scaped
The shipwreck, should be present.
Mene.— If we find
A bark at anchor, with our falchions armed
In one collected band will we assail
And board it.
Helen.— To direct all this, belongs
To you; but may the prosperous breezes fill
Our sails, and guide us o'er the billowy deep.
Mene.—These vows shall be accomplished; for the gods
At length will cause my toils to cease: but whence
Wilt thou pretend thou heard'st that I was dead?
Helen.—Yourself shall be the messenger; relate
How you alone escaped his piteous doom,
A partner of the voyage with the son
Of Atreus, and the witness of his death.
Mene.—This tattered vest will testify my shipwreck.
Helen.—How seasonable was that which seemed at first
To be a grievous loss! but the misfortune
May end perhaps in bliss.
Mene.— Must I with thee
Enter the palace, or before this tomb
Sit motionless?
Helen.— Here stay: for if the king
By force should strive to tear you hence, this tomb
And your drawn sword will save you. But I'll go
To my apartment, shear my flowing hair,
For sable weeds this snowy vest exchange,
And rend with bloody nails these livid cheeks:
For 'tis a mighty conflict, and I see
These two alternatives: if in my plots
Detected, I must die; or to my country
I shall return, and save your life. O Juno,
Thou sacred queen, who shar'st the couch of Jove,
Relieve two wretches from their toils; to thee
Our suppliant arms uplifting high t'wards Heaven
With glittering stars adorned, thy blest abode,
We sue: and thou, O Venus, who didst gain
The palm of beauty through my promised 'spousals,
Spare me, thou daughter of Dione, spare;
For thou enough hast injured me already;
Exposing not my person, but my name,
To those barbarians; suffer me to die,
If thou wilt slay me, in my native land.
Why art thou still insatiably malignant?

Why dost thou harass me by love, by fraud,
By the invention of these new deceits,
And by thy magic philtres plunge in blood
Our miserable house? If thou hadst ruled
With mildness, thou to man hadst been most grateful
Of all the gods. I speak not this at random.
(Helen and Menelaus retire behind the tomb.

CHORUS

ODE

1 1

On thee who build'st thy tuneful seat
Protected by the leafy groves, I call,
O nightingale, thy accents ever sweet
Their murmuring melancholy fall
Prolong! O come, and with thy plaintive strain
Aid me to utter my distress,
Thy woes, O Helen, let the song express,
And those of Troy now levelled with the plain
By Grecian might. From hospitable shores,
Relying on barbaric oars,
The spoiled Paris fled,
And o'er the deep to Priam's realm with pride
Before his imaginary bride,
Fancying that thou hadst graced his bed,
To nuptials fraught with shame by wanton Venus led.

1 2

Unnumbered Greeks, transpierced with spears,
Or crushed beneath the falling ramparts, bled:
Hence with her tresses shorn, immerced in tears
The matron wails her lonely bed,
But Nauplius, kindling near th' Eubœan deep
Those torches, o'er our host prevailed;
Though with a single bark the traitor sailed,
He wrecked whole fleets against Caphareus' steep,
And the Ægean coasts, the beacon seemed
Astar, and through Heaven's conclave gleamed,
Placed on the craggy height.
While flushed with conquest, from the Phrygian strand
They hastened to their native land,
Portentous source of bloody fight,
The cloud by Juno formed, beguiled their dazzled sight.

II 1

Whether the image was divine,
Drew from terrestrial particles its birth,
Or from the middle region, how define
By curious search ye sons of earth?
Far from unravelling Heaven's abstruse intents,
We view the world tost to and fro,
Mark strange vicissitudes of joy and woe,
Discordant and miraculous events.
Thou, Helen, art indeed the child of Jove.
The swan, thy sire, inflamed by love,
To Leda's bosom flew:
Yet with imputed crimes malignant fame
Through Greece arraigns thy slandered name.
Of men I know not whom to trust,
But what the gods pronounce have I found ever just.

II 2

Frantic are ye who seek renown
Amid the horrors of th' embattled field,
Who masking guilt beneath a laurel crown
With nervous arm the falchion wield,
Not slaughtered thousands can your fury sate.
If still success the judgment guide,
If bloody battle right and wrong decide,
Incessant strife must vex each rival state:
Hence from her home departs each Phrygian wife,
O Helen, when the cruel strife
Which from thy charms arose,
One conference might have closed: now myriads dwell
With Pluto in the shades of Hell,
And flames, as when Jove's vengeance throws
The bolt, have caught her towers and finished Ilion's woes.

THEOCLYMENUS, CHORUS (HELEN *and* MENELAUS *behind the tomb*)

Theocly.—Hail, O thou tomb of my illustrious sire!
For thee have I interred before my gate,
That with thy shade I might hold frequent conference
O Proteus; Theoclymenus thy son
Thee, O my father, oft as he goes forth,
Oft as he enters these abodes, accosts.
But to the palace now convey those hounds

And nets, my servants. I full many a time
Have blamed myself, because I never punished
With death such miscreants; now I am informed
That publicly some Greek to these domains
Is come unnoticed by my guards, a spy,
Or one who means to carry Helen off
By stealth: but if I seize him, he shall die.
Methinks I find all over: for the daughter
Of Tyndarus sits no longer at the tomb,
But from these shores hath fled, and now is crossing
The billowy deep. Unbar the gates, bring forth
My coursers from the stalls, and brazen cars;
Lest through my want of vigilance the dame
Whom I would make my sonsort, should escape me
Borne from this land. Yet stay; for I behold
Those we pursue still here beneath this roof,
Nor are they fled. Ho! why in sable vest
Hast thou arrayed thyself, why cast aside
Thy robes of white, and from thy graceful head
With ruthless steel thy glowing ringlets shorn,
And wherefore bathed thy cheek with recent tears?
Groan'st thou, by visions of the night apprized
Of some calamity, or hast thou heard
Within, a rumour that afflicts thy soul?

Helen.—My lord (for I already by that name
Accost you), I am utterly undone,
My former bliss is vanished, and I now
Am nothing.

Theocly.—Art thou plunged into distress
So irretrievable? what cruel fate
Hath overtaken thee?

Helen.— My Menelaus,
(Ah, how shall I express myself?) is dead.

Theocly.—Although I must not triumph in th' event
Thou speak'st of, yet to me 'tis most auspicious.
How know'st thou? Did Theonoe tell thee this?

Helen.—She and this mariner, who when he perished,
Was present, both concur in the same tale.

Theocly.—Is there a man arrived, who for the truth
Of that account can vouch?

Helen.— He is arrived:
And would to Heaven that such auspicious fortune
As I could wish attended him.

Theocly.— Who is he?
Where is he? I must know the real fact.

Helen.—'Tis he who stupefied with sorrow sits
Upon the tomb.
Theocly. In what unseemly garb
Is he arrayed, O Phœbus!
Helen.— In that dress,
Ah me! methinks my husband I behold.
Theocly.—But in what country was the stranger born,
And whence did he come hither?
Helen.— He's a Greek,
One of those Greeks who with my husband sailed.
Theocly.—How doth he say that Menelaus died?
Helen.—Most wretchedly, engulfed amid the waves.
Theocly.—Where? as he passed o'er the barbarian seas?
Helen.—Dashed on the rocks of Libya, which affords
No haven.
Theocly.—But whence happened it, that he
This partner of his voyage did not perish?
Helen.—The worthless are more prosperous than the brave.
Theocly.—Where left he the wrecked fragments of his ship
When he came hither?
Helen.— There, where would to Heaven
Perdition had o'ertaken him, and spared
The life of Menelaus.
Theocly.— He, it seems,
Is then no more: but in what bark arrived
This messenger?
Helen.— Some sailors, as he says,
By chance passed by, and snatched him from the waves.
Theocly.—But where's that hateful pest which in thy stead
Was sent to Ilion?
Helen.— Speak you of a cloud,
Resembling me? it mounted to the skies.
Theocly.—O Priam, for how frivolous a cause
Thou with thy Troy didst perish!
Helen.— In their woes
I too have been involved.
Theocly.— But did he leave
Thy husband's corse unburied, or strew dust
O'er his remains?
Helen.— He left them uninterred,
Ah, wretched me!
Theocly.— And didst thou for this cause
Sever the ringlets of thy auburn hair?
Helen.—Still is he dear, lodged in this faithful breast.

Theocly.—Hast thou sufficient reason then to weep
For this calamity?
Helen.— Could you bear lightly
Your sister's death?
Theocly.— No surely. But what means
Thy still residing at this marble tomb?
Helen.—Why do you harass me with taunting words,
And why disturb the dead?
Theocly.— Because, still constant
To thy first husband, from my love thou fliest.
Helen.—But I will fly no longer: haste, begin
The nuptial rite.
Theocly.— 'Twas long ere thou didst come
To this: but I such conduct must applaud.
Helen.—Know you then how to act? let us forget
All that has passed.
Theocly. Upon what terms? with kindness
Should kindness be repaid.
Helen.— Let us conclude
The peace, and O be reconciled.
Theocly.— All strife
With thee I to the winds of heaven consign.
Helen.—Now, since you are my friend, I by those knees
Conjure you.
Theocly.— With what object in thy view,
To me an earnest suppliant dost thou bend?
Helen.—I my departed husband would inter.
Theocly.—What tomb can be bestowed upon the absent
Wouldst thou inter his shade?
Helen.— There is a custom
Among the Greeks established, that the man
Who in the ocean perishes——
Theocly.— What is it?
For in such matters Pelops' race are wise.
Helen.—To bury in their stead an empty vest.
Theocly.—Perform funereal rites, and heap the tomb
On any ground thou wilt.
Helen.— We in this fashion
Bury not the drowned mariner.
Theocly.— How then?
I am a stranger to the Grecian customs.
Helen.—Each pious gift to our breathless friends
We cost into the sea.
Theocly.— On the deceased
What presents for thy sake can I bestow?

Helen.—I know not: for in offices like these
Am I unpractised, having erst been happy.
Theocly.—An acceptable message have you brought,
O stranger.
Mene.— Most ungrateful to myself
And the deceased.
Theocly.— What funereal rites on those
Ocean hath swallowed up, do ye bestow?
Mene.—Such honours as each individual's wealth
Enables us to pay him.
Theocly.— Name the cost,
And for her sake receive whate'er you will.
Mene.—Blood is our first libation to the dead.
Theocly.—What blood? inform me, for with your instructions
I will comply.
Mene.— Determine that thyself,
For whatsoe'er thou giv'st will be sufficient.
Theocly.—The customary victims 'mong barbarians
Are either horse or bull.
Mene.— Whate'er thou giv'st,
Let it be somewhat princely.
Theocly.— My rich herds
With these are amply furnished.
Mene.— And the bier
Without the corse is borne in solemn state.
Theocly.—It shall: but what is there besides which custom
Requires to grace the funeral.
Mene.— Brazen arms:
For war was what he loved.
Theocly.— We will bestow
Such presents as are worthy of the race
Of mighty Pelops.
Mene.— And those budding flowers
Th' exuberant soil produces.
Theocly.— But say, how
And in what manner ye these offerings plunge
Into the ocean.
Mene.— We must have a bark
And mariners to ply the oars.
Theocly.— How far
Will they launch forth the vessel from the strand?
Mene.—So far as from the shore thou scarce wilt see
The keel divide the waves.
Theocly.— But why doth Greece
Observe this usage?

Mene.— Lest the rising billows
Cast back to land th' ablutions.
Theocly.— Ye shall have
A swift Phœnician vessel
Mene.— This were kind,
And no small favour shown to Menelaus.
Theocly.—Without her presence, cannot you perform
These rites alone?
Mene.— Such task or to a mother,
Or wife, or child, belongs.
Theocly.— 'Tis then her duty,
You say, to bury her departed lord?
Mene.—Sure, piety instructs us not to rob
The dead of their accustomed dues.
Theocly.— Enough:
On me it is incumbent to promote
Such virtue in my consort. I will enter
The palace, and from thence for the deceased
Bring forth rich ornaments; with empty hands
You from this region will not I send forth,
That you may execute what she desires.
But having brought me acceptable tidings,
Instead of these vile weeds shall you receive
A decent garb and food, that to your country
You may return: for clearly I perceive
That you are wretched now. But torture not
Thy bosom with unprofitable cares,
O hapless woman, for thy Menelaus
Is now no more, nor can the dead revive.
Mene.—Thee it behoves, O blooming dame, to love
Thy present husband, and to lay aside
The fond remembrance of thy breathless lord;
For such behaviour suits thy fortunes best.
But if to Greece with safety I return,
That infamy which erst pursued thy name
I'll cause to cease, if thou acquit thyself
Of these great duties like a virtuous consort.
Helen.—I will; nor shall my husband e'er have cause
To blame me: you too, who are here, shall witness
The truth of my assertions. But within
Go lave your wearied limbs, O wretched man,
And change your habit; for without delay
To you will I become a benefactress.
Hence too with greater zeal will you perform
The rites my dearest Menelaus claims,

If all due honours you from me receive.
(Exeunt Theoclymenus, Helen, and Menelaus.

CHORUS

ODE

1 1

O'er mountains erst with hasty tread
Didst the celestial mother stray,
Nor stop where branching thickets spread,
Where rapid torrents crossed her way,
Or on the margin of the billowy deep;
Her daughter whom we dread to name
She wept, while hailing that majestic dame,
Cymbals of Bacchus from the craggy steep
Sent forth their clear and piercing sound,
Her car the harnessed dragons drew;
Following the nymph torn from her virgin crew.
Amidst her maidens swift of foot were found
Diana skilled the bow to wield,
Minerva, who in glittering state
Brandished the spear and raised her Gorgon shield;
But Jove looked down from Heaven t'award another fate.

1 2

Soon as the mother's toils were o'er,
When she had finished her career,
And sought the ravished maid no more,
To caves where drifted snows appear,
By Ida's nymphs frequented, did she pass,
And threw herself in sorrow lost,
On rocks and herbage crusted o'er with frost,
Despoiled the wasted champaign of its grass.
Rendered the peasant's tillage vain,
Consuming a dispeopled land
With meagre famine; Spring at her command
Denied the flocks that sickened on the plain
The leafy tendrils of the vine;
Whole cities died, no victims bled,
No frankincense perfumed Heaven's vacant shrine;
Nor burst the current from the Spring's obstructed head.

II 1

Then ceased the banquet, wont to charm
Both gods above and men below:
The mother's anger to disarm,
And mitigate the stings of woe,
Till in these words Jove uttered his behests:
"Let each benignant grace attend
Sweet music's sympathizing aid to lend,
And drive corrosive grief from Ceres' breast
Indignant for her ravished child:
Now, O ye Muses, with the lyre
Join the shrill hymns of your assembled choir,
The brazen trumpet fill with accents wild,
And beat the rattling drums amain."
Then first of the immortal band,
Venus with lovely smile approved the strain,
And raised the deep-toned flute in her enchanting hand.

II 2

The laws reproved such foul desire,
Yet 'gainst religion didst thou wed;
Thy uncle caught love's baleful fire,
And rushed to thy incestuous bed.
Thee shall the mighty mother's wrath confound,
Because, through thee, before her shrine
No victims slain appease the powers divine.
Great virtue have hinds' hides, and ivy wound
Upon a consecrated rod;
And youths, with virgins in a ring,
When high from earth with matchless force they spring,
Loose streams their hair, they celebrate that god
The Bacchanalian votaries own,
And waste in dance the sleepless night.
But thou, confiding in thy charms alone,
Forgett'st the moon that shines with more transcendent light.

HELEN, CHORUS

Helen.—Within the palace, O my friends, we prosper
For Proteus' royal daughter, in our schemes
Conspiring when her brother questioned her
About my lord, no information gave
Of his arrival: to my interests true
She said, that cold in death he views no longer

The radiant sun. But now my lord hath seized
A vengeful falchion, in that mail designed
To have been plunged beneath the deep arrayed
With nervous arm he lifts an orbed shield,
In his right hand protended gleams the spear,
As if with me he was prepared to pay
To the deceased due homage. Furnished thus
With brazen arms, he's ready for the battle,
And numberless barbarians will subdue
Unaided, soon as we the ship ascend.
Exchanging those unseemly weeds which clothe
The shipwrecked mariner, in splendid robes
Have I arrayed him, from transparent springs
The laver filled, and bathed his wearied limbs.
But I must now be silent, for the man
Who fancies I am ready to become
His consort, leaves the palace. O my friends,
In your attachment too I place my trust,
Restrain your tongues, for we, when saved ourselves,
If possible will save you from this thraldom.

THEOCLYMENUS, HELEN, MENELAUS, CHORUS

Theocly.—Go forth, in such procession as the stranger
Directs you, O my servants, and convey
These gifts funereal to the briny deep.
But if thou disapprove not what I say,
Do thou, O Helen, yield to my persuasions,
And here remain. For whether thou attend,
Or art not present at the obsequies
Of thy departed husband, thou to him
Wilt show an equal reverence. Much I dread
Lest hurried on by wild desire thou plunge
Into the foaming billows, for the sake
Of him on whom thou doat'st, thy former lord,
Since thou his doom immoderately bewail'st
Though he be lost, and never can return.
Helen.—O my illustrious husband, I am bound
To pay due honours to the man whom first
I wedded, of our ancient nuptial joys
A memory still retaining, for so well
I loved my lord that I could even die
With him. But what advantage would result
To the deceased, should I lay down my life?
Yet let me go myself, and to his shade

Perform each solemn rite. But may the gods,
On you, and on the stranger who assists me
In this my pious task, with liberal hand
Confer the gifts I wish. But you in me
Shall such a consort to your palace bear
As you deserve, to recompense your kindness
To me and Menelaus. Such events
In some degree are measured by the will
Of Fortune: but give orders for a ship
To be prepared, these trappings to convey,
So shall your purposed bounty be complete.

Theocly. (to one of his Attendants.)
Go thou, and furnish them a Tyrian bark
Of fifty oars, with skilful sailors manned.

Helen.—But may not he who decorates the tomb
Govern the ship?

Theocly. My sailors must to him
Yield an implicit deference.

Helen.— This injunction
Repeat, that they may clearly understand it.

Theocly.—A second time, will I, and yet a third,
Issue this self-same mandate, if to thee
This can give pleasure.

Helen.— May the gods confer
Blessings on you, and prosper my designs!

Theocly.—Waste not thy bloom with unavailing tears.

Helen.—To you this day my gratitude will prove.

Theocly.—All these attentions to the dead are nought
But unavailing toil.

Helen.— My pious care
Not to those only whom the silent grave
Contains, but to the living too extends.

Theocly.—In me thou mayst expect to find a husband
Who yields not to the Spartan Menelaus.

Helen.—I censure not your conduct, but bewail
My own harsh destiny.

Theocly.— Bestow thy love
On me, and prosperous fortunes shall return.

Helen.—It is a lesson I have practised long,
To love my friends.

Theocly.— Shall I my navy launch,
To join in these funereal rites?

Helen.— Dread lord,
Pay not unseemly homage to your vassals.

Theocly.—Well! I each sacred usage will allow

Practised by Pelops' race, for my abodes
Are undefiled with blood: thy Menelaus
In Ægypt died not. But let some one haste
And bid the nobles bear into my house
The bridal gifts: for the whole earth is bound
To celebrate in one consenting hymn
My blest espousals with the lovely Helen,
But go, embark upon the briny main,
O stranger, and as soon as ye have paid
All decent homage to her former lord
Bring back my consort hither: that with me
When you have feasted at our nuptial rite
You to your native mansion may return,
Or here continue in a happy state.

(Exit Theoclymenus.

Mene.—O Jove, thou mighty father, who art called
A god supreme in wisdom, from thy heaven
Look down, and save us from our woes: delay not
To aid us: for we drag the galling yoke
Of sorrow and mischance: if with thy finger
Thou do but touch us, we shall soon attain
The fortune which we wish for, since the toils
We have endured already are sufficient.
Ye gods, I now invoke you, from my mouth
So shall ye hear full many joyful accents
Mixed with these bitter plaints: for I deserve not
To be for ever wretched; but to tread
At length secure. O grant me this one favour,
And make my future life completely blest.

(Exeunt Menelaus and Helen.

CHORUS

ODE

1 1

Swift bark of Sidon, by whose dashing oars
Divided oft, the frothy billows rise,
Propitious be thy voyage from these shores:
In thy train the dolphins play,
O'er the deep thou lead'st the way,
While motionless its placid surface lies.
Soon as Serenity the fair,
That azure daughter of the main
Shall in this animating strain

Have spoken: "To the gentle breeze of air
Expand each undulating sail,
Row briskly on before the gale,
Ye mariners, in Perseus' ancient seat
Till Helen rest her wearied feet."

1 2

Those sacred nymphs shall welcome thy return
Who guard the portals of Minerva's fane
Or speed the current from its murmuring urn:
Choral dances of delight
That prolong the jocund night,
At Hyacinthus' banquet shalt thou join,
Fair stripling, whom with luckless hand
Unwitting did Apollo slay
At games that crowned the festive day,
Hurling his quoit on the Laconian strand;
To him Jove's son due honours paid:
At Sparta too, that lovely maid
Shalt thou behold, whom there thou left'st behind,
Still to celibacy consigned.

II 1

O might we cleave the air, like Libyan cranes,
Who fly in ranks th' impending wintry storm;
When their shrill leader bids them quit the plains,
They the veteran's voice obey,
O'er rich harvests wing their way,
Or where parched wastes th' unfruitful scene deform.
With lengthened neck, ye feathered race
Who skim the clouds in social band,
Where the seven Pleiades expand
Their radiance, and Orion heaves his mace,
This joyous embassy convey
As near Eurotas' banks ye stray;
That Menelaus to his subject land
Victorious comes from Phrygia's strand.

II. 2

Borne in your chariot down th' ethereal height,
At length, ye sons of Tyndarus, appear,
While vibrates o'er your heads the starry light:
Habitants of heaven above,

Now exert fraternal love,
If ever Helen to your souls was dear,
A calm o'er th' azure ocean spread,
Bridle the tempests of the main,
Propitious gales from Jove obtain,
Your sister snatch from the barbarian's bed:
Commenced on Ida's hill, that strife,
Embittered with reproach her life,
Although she never viewed proud Ilion's tower
Reared by Apollo's matchless power.

THEOCLYMENUS, MESSENGER, CHORUS

Mess.—O king, I have discovered in the palace,
Events most inauspicious: what fresh woes
Is it my doleful office to relate!
Theocly.—Say what hath happened?
Mess.— Seek another wife,
For Helen hath departed from this realm.
Theocly.—Borne through the air on wings, or with swift foot
Treading the ground?
Mess.— Her o'er the briny main
From Ægypt's shores, hath Menelaus wafted,
Who came in person with a feigned account
Of his own death.
Theocly.— O dreadful tale! what ship
From these domains conveys her? thou relat'st
Tidings the most incredible.
Mess.— The same
You to that stranger gave, and in one word
To tell you all, he carries off your sailors.
Theocly.—How is that possible? I wish to know:
For such an apprehension never entered
My soul, as that one man could have subdued
The numerous band of mariners, with whom
Thou were sent forth.
Mess.— When from the royal mansion
Jove's daughter to the shore was borne, she trod
With delicate and artful step, pretending
To wail her husband's loss, though he was present,
And yet alive. But when we reached the haven,
Sidonia's largest vessel we hauled forth,
Furnished with benches, and with fifty oars;
But a fresh series of incessant toil
Followed this toil; for while one fixed the mast,

Another ranged the oars, and with his hand
The signal gave, the sails were bound together,
Then was the rudder fastened to the stern
With thongs, cast forth: while they observed us busied
In such laborious task, the Grecian comrades
Of Menelaus to the shore advanced,
Clad in their shipwrecked vestments. Though their form
Was graceful, yet their visages were squalid:
But Atreus' son, beholding their approach,
Under the semblance of a grief that masked
His treacherous purpose, in these words addressed them:
"How, O ye wretched sailors, from what bark
Of Greece that hath been wrecked upon this coast
Are ye come hither? will ye join with us
In the funereal rites of Menelaus,
Whom Tyndarus's daughter, to an empty tomb
Consigns, though absent?" Simulated tears
They shed, and went aboard the ship, conveying
The presents to be cast into the sea
For Menelaus. But to us these things
Appeared suspicious, and we made remarks
Among ourselves upon this numerous band
Of our intruding passengers; but checked
Our tongues from speaking openly, through deference
To your commands. For when you to that stranger
Trusted the guidance of the ship, you caused
This dire confusion. All beside, with ease
Had we now lodged aboard, but could not force
The sturdy bull t' advance; he bellowing rolled
His eyes around, bending his back and low'ring
Betwixt his horns, nor dared we to approach
And handle him. But Helen's husband cried
"O ye who laid Troy waste, will ye forget
To act like Greeks? why scruple ye to seize
And on your youthful shoulders heave the beast
Up to the rising prow, a welcome victim
To the deceased?" His falchion, as he spoke,
The warrior drew. His summons they obeyed,
Seized the stout bull, and carried him aboard:
But Menelaus stroked the horse's neck
And face, and with this gentle usage led him
Into the bark. At length when all its freight
The vessel had received, with graceful foot
Helen, the steps ascending, took her seat
On the mid deck; and Menelaus near her,

E'en he who they pretended was no more.
But some on the right side, and on the left
Others in equal numbers, man to man
Opposed, their station took, their swords concealing
Beneath their garments. We distinctly heard
The clamorous sailors animate each other
To undertake the voyage. But from land
When a convenient distance we had steered,
The pilot asked this question: "Shall we sail,
O stranger, any farther from the coast,
Or is this right? for 'tis my task to guide
The vessel." He replied: "Enough for me."
Then seized with his right hand the falchion, leaped
Upon the prow, and standing o'er the bull
The victim (without mentioning the name
Of any chief deceased; but as he drove
The weapon through his neck) thus prayed: "O Neptune,
Who in the ocean dwell'st, and ye chaste daughters
Of Nereus, to the Nauplian shore convey
Me and my consort, from this hostile land,
In safety." But a crimson tide of blood,
Auspicious to the stranger, stained the waves;
And some exclaimed "There's treachery in this voyage,
Let us sail homewards, issue thy commands,
And turn the rudder." But the son of Atreus,
Who had just slain the bull, to his companions
Called loudly: "Why delay, O ye the flower
Of Greece, to smite, to slaughter those barbarians,
And cast them from the ship into the waves?"
But to your sailors our commander spoke
A different language: "Will not some of you
Tear up a plank, or with a shattered bench,
Or ponderous oar, upon the bleeding heads
Of those audacious foreigners our foes,
Impress the ghastly wound?" But on their feet
All now stood up; our hands with nautic poles
Were armed, and theirs with swords: a tide of slaughter
Ran down the ship. But Helen from the poop
The Greeks encouraged: "Where is the renown
Ye gained at Troy? display 'gainst these barbarians
The same undaunted prowess." In their haste
Full many fell, some rose again, the rest
Might you have seen stretched motionless in death.
But Menelaus, sheathed in glittering mail,
Wherever his confederates he descried

Hard pressed, rushed thither with his lifted sword,
Driving us headlong from the lofty deck
Into the waves, and forced your mariners
To quit their oars. But the victorious king
Now seized the rudder, and to Greece declared
He would convey the ship: they hoisted up
The stately mast: propitious breezes came;
They left the land: but I from death escaping,
Let myself gently down into the waves
Borne on the cordage which sustains the anchor;
My strength began to fail, when some kind hand
Threw forth a rope, and brought me safe ashore,
That I to you these tidings might convey.
There's nought more beneficial to mankind
Than wise distrust.

Chorus.— I never could have thought
That Menelaus who was here, O king,
Could have imposed so grossly or on you
Or upon us.

Theocly.— Wretch that I am, ensnared
By woman's treacherous arts! the lovely bride
I hoped for, hath escaped me. If the ship
Could be o'ertaken by our swift pursuit,
My wrongs would urge me with vindictive hand
To seize the strangers. But I now will punish
That sister who betrayed me; in my house
Who when she saw the Spartan Menelaus,
Informed me not: she never shall deceive
Another man by her prophetic voice.

Chorus.—Ho! whither, O my sovereign, would you go,
And for what bloody purpose?

Theocly.— Where the voice
Of rigid justice summons me. Retire,
And stand aloof.

Chorus.— Yet will not I let loose
Your garment; for you hasten to commit
A deed most mischievous.

Theocly.— Wouldst thou, a slave,
Govern thy lord?

Chorus.— Here reason's on my side.

Theocly.—That shall not I allow, if thou refuse
To quit thy hold.

Chorus.— I will not then release you.

Theocly.—To slay that worst of sisters.

Chorus.— That most pious.

Theocly.—Her who betrayed me.
Chorus.— Glorious was the fraud
That caused so just a deed.
Theocly.— When she bestowed
My consort on another.
Chorus.— On the man
Who had a better claim——
Theocly.— But who is lord
Of what belongs to me?
Chorus.— Who from her sire
Received her.
Theocly.— She by Fortune was bestowed
On me.
Chorus.—But ta'en away again by Fate.
Theocly.—Thou hast no right to judge of my affairs.
Chorus.—If I but speak to you better counsels.
Theocly.—I am thy subject then, and not thy king.
Chorus.—For having acted piously, your sister
I vindicate.
Theocly.—Thou seem'st to wish for death.
Chorus.—Kill me. Your sister you with my consent
Shall never slay; I rather would yield up
My life on her behalf. It is most glorious
To generous servants for their lords to die.

CASTOR *and* POLLUX, THEOCLYMENUS, CHORUS

Cas. & P.—Restrain that ire that hurries thee away
Beyond the bounds of reason, O thou king
Of Ægypt's realm; and listen to the voice
Of us twin sons of Jove, whom Leda bore
Together with that Helen who is fled
From thy abodes. Thou rashly hast indulged
Thine anger, for the loss of her whom Fate
Ne'er destined to thy bed. Nor hath thy sister
Theonoe, from th' immortal Nereid sprung,
To thee done any injury; she reveres
The gods, and her great father's just behests.
For till the present hour, was it ordained
That Helen in thy palace should reside:
But when Troy's walls were from their bases torn,
And she had to the rival goddesses
Furnish her name, no longer was it fit
That she should for thy nuptials be detained,
But to her ancient home return, and dwell

With her first husband. In thy sister's breast
Forbear to plunge the sword, and be convinced
That she in this affair hath acted wisely.
We long ere this our sister had preserved,
Since Jove hath made us gods, but were too weak
At once to combat the behests of Fate,
And the immortal powers, who had ordained
That these events should happen. This to thee,
O Theoclymenus, I speak. These words
Next to my lovely sister, I address;
Sail with your husband, for a prosperous breeze
Your voyage shall attend. We your protectors
And your twin brothers, on our coursers borne
Over the waves, will guide you to your country,
But after you have finished life's career,
You shall be called a goddess, shall partake
With us the rich oblations, and receive
The gifts of men: for thus hath Jove decreed.
But where the son of Maia placed you first,
When he had borne you from the Spartan realm,
And formed by stealth from the aërial mansions
An image of your person, to prevent
Paris from wedding you, there is an isle
Near the Athenian realm, which men shall call
Helen in future times, because that spot
Received you, when in secrecy conveyed
From Sparta. The Heavens also have ordained
The wanderer Menelaus shall reside
Among the happy islands. For the gods
To those of nobler minds no hatred bear;
At their command though grievous toil await
The countless multitude.

Theocly.— Ye sons of Jove
And Leda, I the contest will decline
Which I at first so violently urged,
Hoping your lovely sister to obtain,
And my own sister's life resolve to spare:
Let Helen to her native shores return,
If 'tis the will of Heaven: but be assured,
The same high blood ye spring from with the best
And chastest sister: hail then, for the sake
Of Helen with a lofty soul endued,
Such as in female bosoms seldom dwells.

Chorus.—A thousand shapes our varying fates assume

The gods perform what least we could expect,
And oft the things for which we fondly hoped
Come not to pass; but Heaven still finds a clue
To guide our steps through life's perplexing maze,
And thus doth this important business end.

THE FROGS

THE FROGS

(Aristophanes, the greatest of Greek comic poets, was born in 455 B.C., he son of Philippus, a landowner, in Aegina. In politics, Aristophanes, eld conservative views and was strongly antagonistic to the school of hinkers represented by Socrates and Euripedes. His plays were often nade the medium of his opinions, and through them he gave expression o his brilliant powers of wit, humor, and invective. Another great eature of his plays was the originality of plot, and graceful and vigorous ialogue. Of his many comedies, only eleven have been preserved. The est of these are; "The Knights," "The Frogs," "The Clouds," "The Vasps," "The Birds," and "The Peace." He died in 375 B.C.)

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Bacchus.	Pluto.
Xanthias, servant of Bacchus.	Dead Man.
Hercules.	Proserpine's Servant Maid.
Charon.	Two Women Sutlers.
Æacus.	Mutes.
Euripides.	Chorus of Votaries, and
Æschylus.	Frogs.

THE ARGUMENT

Bacchus, the patron of the stage, in despair at the decline of the ramatic art (which had lately been deprived of its best tragic uthors, Sophocles and Euripides), determines to descend the infernal egions with the intention of procuring the release of Euripides. le appears accordingly, equipped for the expedition, with the lion's kin and club (in imitation of Hercules, whose success in—a similar dventure has encouraged him to the attempt); he still retains, how-ver, his usual effeminate costume, which forms a contrast with ese heroic attributes. Xanthias, his slave (like Silenus, the mytho-gic attendant of Bacchus), is mounted upon an ass; but, in con-rmity with the practice of other human slaves when attending eir mortal masters upon an earthly journey, he carries a certain le upon his shoulder, at the ends of which the various packages, cessary for his master's accomodation, are suspended in equilibrio. he first scene (which, if it had not been the first, might perhaps ve been omitted) contains a censure of the gross taste of the au-ence (suitable to the character of Bacchus as patron of the stage)

with allusions to some contemporary rival authors, who submitted to court the applause of the vulgar by mere buffoonery.—The argument between Bacchus and Xanthias, at the end of this scene, probably contains some temporary allusion now unknown, but is obviously, and in the first place, a humorous exemplification of the philosophical, verbal sophisms, not, in all probability, new, even then, but which were then, for the first time, introduced in Athens, and which may be traced from thence to the schoolmen of the middle ages. Xanthias carries the bundles *passivè* et *formaliter,* the ass carries them *activè* et *materialiter.*

THE FROGS

BACCHUS, XANTHIAS

Xan.—Master, shall I begin with the usual jokes
That the audience always laugh at?
Bac. If you please;
Any joke you please except "being overburthen'd."
—Don't use it yet—We've time enough before us.
Xan.—Well, something else that's comical and clever?
Bac.—I forbid being "overpress'd and overburthen'd."
Xan.—Well, but the drollest joke of all—?
Bac. Remember
There's one thing I protest against—
Xan. What's that?
Bac.—Why, shifting off your load to the other shoulder,
And fidgeting and complaining of the gripes.
Xan.—What then do you mean to say, that I must not say
That I'm ready to befoul myself?
Bac.—(peremptorily). By no means—
Except when I take an emetic
Xan.—(in a sullen, muttering tone, as if resentful of hard usage).
What's the use, then,
Of my being burthen'd here with all these bundles,
If I'm to be deprived of the common jokes
That Phrynichus, and Lycis, and Ameipsias
Allow the servants always in their comedies,
Without exception, when they carry bundles?
Bac.—Pray, leave them off—for those ingenious sallies
Have such an effect upon my health and spirits
That I feel grown old and dull when I get home.
Xan.—(as before, or with a sort of half-mutinous whine).
It's hard for me to suffer in my limbs,
To be overburthen'd and debarr'd from joking.
Bac.—Well, this is monstrous, quite, and insupportable!

Such insolence in a servant! When your master
Is going afoot and has provided you
With a beast to carry ye.

Xan. What! do I carry nothing?

Bac.—You're carried yourself.

Xan. But I carry bundles, don't I?

Bac.—But the beast bears all the burdens that you carry.

Xan.—Not those that I carry myself—'tis I that carry 'em.

Bac.—You're carried yourself, I tell ye.

Xan. I can't explain it,
But I feel it in my shoulders plainly enough.

Bac.—Well, if the beast don't help you, take and try;
Change places with the ass and carry him.

Xan.—(in a tone of mere digust).
Oh, dear! I wish I had gone for a volunteer,
And left you to yourself. I wish I had.

Bac.—Dismount, you rascal! Here, we're at the house
Where Hercules lives,—Holloh! there! who's within there?
(Bacchus kicks outrageously at the door.

HERCULES, BACCHUS, XANTHIAS

Her.—Who's there? (He has bang'd at the door, whoever he is,
With the kick of a centaur.) What's the matter, there?

Bac.—(aside). Ha! Xanthias!

Xan. What?

Bac.—(aside). Did ye mind how he was frighten'd?

Xan.—I suppose he was afraid you were going mad.

Her.—(aside). By Jove! I shall laugh outright; I'm ready to burst.
I shall laugh, in spite of myself, upon my life.
(Hercules shifts about, and turns aside to disguise his laughter: this apparent shyness confirms Bacchus in the opinion of his own ascendancy, which he manifests accordingly.

Bac.—(with a tone of protection).
Come hither, friend.—What ails ye? Step this way;
I want to speak to ye.

Her.—(with a good-humoured, but unsuccessful endeavour to suppress laughter, or to conceal it. Suppose him, for instance, speaking with his hand before his mouth).
But I can't help laughing
To see the lion's skin with a saffron robe,
And the club with the woman's sandals—altogether—
What's the meaning of it all? Have you been abroad?

Bac.—I've been abroad—in the Fleet—with Cleisthenes.
Her. (sharply and ironically.)—You fought—?
Bac. (briskly and sillily).—Yes, that we did—we gain'd a victory;
And we sunk the enemies' ships—thirteen of 'em.
Her.—"So you woke at last and found it was a dream?"
Bac.—But aboard the fleet, as I pursued my studies,
I read the tragedy of Andromeda;
And then such a vehement passion struck my heart,
You can't imagine.
Her. A small one, I suppose,
My little fellow—a moderate little passion?
Bac.—(ironically: the irony of imbecility).
It's just as small as Molon is—that's all—
Molon the wrestler, I mean—as small as he is—
Her.—Well, what was it like? what kind of a thing? what was it?
Bac.—(meaning to be very serious and interesting).
No, friend, you must not laugh; it's past a joke;
It's quite a serious feeling—quite distressing;
I suffer from it—
Her.—(bluntly). Well, explain. What was it?
Bac.—I can't declare it at once; but I'll explain it
Theatrically and enigmatically:
(With a buffoonish assumption of tragic gesture and emphasis.
Were you ever seized with a sudden passionate longing
For a mess of porridge?
Her. Often enough, if that's all.
Bac.—Shall I state the matter to you plainly at once;
Or put it circumlocutorily?
Her.—Not about the porridge. I understand your instance.
Bac.—Such is the passion that possesses me
For poor Euripides, that's dead and gone;
And it's all in vain people trying to persuade me
From going after him.
Her. What, to the shades below?
Bac.—Yes, to the shades below, or the shades beneath 'em.
To the undermost shades of all. I'm quite determined.
Her.—But what's your object?
Bac.—(with a ridiculous imitation of tragical action and emphasis).
Why my object is
That I want a clever poet—"for the good,
The gracious and the good, are dead and gone;
The worthless and the weak are left alive."

Her.—Is not Iophon a good one?—He's alive sure?
Bac.—If he's a good one, he's our only good one;
But it's a question; I'm in doubt about him.
Her.—There's Sophocles; he's older than Euripides—
If you go so far for 'em, you'd best bring him.
Bac.—No; first I'll try what Iophon can do,
Without his father, Sophocles, to assist him.
—Besides, Euripides is a clever rascal;
A sharp, contriving rogue that will make a shift
To desert and steal away with me; the other
Is an easy-minded soul, and always was.
Her.—Where's Agathon?
Bac. He's gone and left me too,
Regretted by his friends; a worthy poet—
—Gone! Where, poor soul?
Bac. To the banquets of the blest!
Her.—But then you've Xenocles—
Bac. Yes! a plague upon him!
Her.—Pythangelus too—
Xan. But nobody thinks of me;
Standing all this while with the bundles on my shoulder.
Her.—But have not you other young ingenious youths
That are fit to out-talk Euripides ten times over;
To the amount of a thousand, at least, all writing tragedy—?
Bac.—They're good for nothing—"Warblers of the Grove"—
—"Little, foolish, fluttering things"—poor puny wretches,
That dawdle and dangle about with the tragic muse;
Incapable of any serious meaning—
—There's not one hearty poet amongst them all
That's fit to risk an adventurous valiant phrase.
Her.—How—"hearty?" What do you mean by "valiant phrases?"
Bac.—(the puzzle of a person who is called upon for a definition).
I mean a . . . kind . . . of a . . . doubtful, bold expression
To talk about . . . "The viewless foot of Time"—
(Tragic emphasis in the quotations.
And . . . "Jupiter's Secret Chamber in the Skies"—
And about . . . A person's soul . . . not being perjured
When . . . the tongue . . . forswears itself . . . in spite of the soul.
Her.—Do you like that kind of stuff?
Bac.— I'm crazy after it.

Her.—Why, sure, it's trash and rubbish—Don't you think so?
Bac.—"Men's fancies are their own—Let mine alone"—
Her.—But, in fact, it seems to me quite bad—rank nonsense.
Bac.—You'll tell me next what I ought to like for supper.
Xan.—But nobody thinks of me here, with the bundles.
Bac.—(with a careless, easy, voluble, degagé style).
—But now to the business that I came upon—
(Upon a footing of equality.—The tone of a person who is dispatching business off-hand, with readiness and unconcern.
(With the apparel that you see—the same as yours)
To obtain a direction from you to your friends,
(To apply to them—in case of anything—
If anything should occur) the acquaintances
That received you there—(the time you went before
—For the business about Cerberus)—if you'd give me
Their names and their directions, and communicate
Any information relative to the country,
The roads,—the streets,—the bridges, and the brothels,
The wharfs,—the public walks,—the public houses,
The fountains,—aqueducts,—and inns, and taverns,
And lodgings,—free from bugs and fleas, is possible,
If you know any such—
Xan. But nobody thinks of me.
Her.—What a notion! You! will you risk it? are you mad?
Bac.—meaning to be very serious and manly).
I beseech you say no more—no more of that,
But inform me briefly and plainly about my journey:
The shortest road and the most convenient one.
Her.—(with a tone of easy, indolent, deliberate banter).
Well,—which shall I tell ye first, now?—Let me see now—
There's a good convenient road by the Rope and Noose;
The Hanging Road.
Bac. No; that's too close and stifling.
Her.—Then, there's an easy, fair, well-beaten track,
As you go by the Pestle and Mortar—
Bac. What, the Hemlock?
Her.—To be sure—
Bac.— That's much too cold—it will never do.
They tell me it strikes a chill to the legs and feet.
Her.—Should you like a speedy, rapid, downhill road?
Bac. Indeed I should, for I'm a sorry traveller.
Her.—Go to the Keramicus then.
Bac. What then?
Her.—Get up to the very top of the tower.

Bac. What then?
Her.—Stand there and watch when the Race of the Torch begins;
And mind when you hear the people cry "Start! start!"
Then start at once with 'em.
Bac. Me? Start? Where from?
Her.—From the top of the tower to the bottom.
Bac.— No, not I.
It's enough to dash my brains out! I'll not go
Such a road upon any account.
Her. Well, which way then?
Bac.—The way you went yourself.
Her. But it's a long one,
For first you come to a monstrous bottomless lake.
Bac.—And what must I do to pass?
Her. You'll find a boat there;
A little tiny boat, as big as that,
And an old man that ferries you over in it,
Receiving twopence as the usual fee.
Bac.—Ah! that same twopence governs everything
Wherever it goes.—I wonder how it managed
To find its way there?
Her. Theseus introduced it.
—Next you'll meet serpents, and wild beasts, and monsters,
(Suddenly and with a shout in Bacchus's ear.
Horrific to behold!
Bac.—(starting a little). Don't try to fright me;
You'll not succeed, I promise you.—I'm determined.
Her.—Then there's an abyss of mire and floating filth,
In which the damn'd lie wallowing and overwhelm'd;
The unjust, the cruel, and the inhospitable;
And the barbarous bilking Cullies that withhold
The price of intercourse with fraud and wrong;
The incestuous, and the parricides, and the robbers;
The perjurers, and assassins, and the wretches
That wilfully and presumptuously transcribe
Extracts and trash from Morsimus's plays.
Bac.—And, by Jove! Cinesias with his Pyrrhic dancers
Ought to be there—they're worse, or quite as bad.
Her.—But after this your sense will be saluted
With a gentle breathing sound of flutes and voices,
And a beautiful spreading light like our on earth,
And myrtle glades and happy quires among,
Of women and men with rapid applause and mirth.
Bac.—And who are all those folks?

Her. The initiated.
Xan.—(gives indications of restiveness, as if ready to throw down his bundles).
I won't stand here like a mule in a procession
Any longer, with these packages and bundles.
Her.—(hastily, in a civil hurry, as when you shake a man by the hand, and shove him out of the room, and give him your best wishes and advice all at once).
They'll tell you everything you want to know,
For they're established close upon the road,
By the corner of Pluto's house—so fare you well;
Farewell, my little fellow. (Exit.
Bac.—(pettishly). I wish you better.
(to Xanthias) You, sirrah, take your bundles up again.
Xan.—What, before I put them down?
Bac. Yes! now, this moment.
Xan.—Nah! don't insist; there's plenty of people going
As corpses with the convenience of a carriage;
They'd take it for a trifle gladly enough.
Bac.—But if we meet with nobody?
Xan. Then I'll take 'em.
Bac.—Come, come, that's fairly spoken, and in good time;
For there they're carrying a corpse out to be buried.
(A funeral, with a corpse on an open bier, crosses the stage.
—Holloh! you there—you Deadman—can't you hear?
Would you take any bundles to hell with ye, my good fellow?
Deadman.—What are they?
Bac. These.
Deadman.— Then I must have two drachmas.
Bac.—I can't—you must take less.
Deadman.—(peremptorily). Bearers, move on.
Bac.—No, stop! we shall settle between us—you're so hasty.
Deadman.—It's no use arguing; I must have two drachmas.
Bac.—(emphatically and significantly). Ninepence!
Deadman. I'd best be alive again at that rate. (Exit.
Bac.—Fine airs the fellow gives himself—a rascal!
I'll have him punish'd, I vow, for overcharging.
Xan.—Best give him a good beating: give me the bundles,
I'll carry 'em.
Bac.— You're a good, true-hearted fellow;
And a willing servant.—Let's move on to the ferry.

CHARON, BACCHUS, XANTHIAS

Char.—Hoy! Bear a hand, there—Heave ashore.
Bac. What's this?
Xan.—The lake it is—the place he told us of.
By Jove! and there's the boat—and here's old Charon.
Bac.—Well, Charon!—Welcome, Charon!—Welcome kindly!
Char.—Who wants the ferryman? Anybody waiting
To remove from the sorrows of life? A passage anybody?
To Lethe's wharf?—to Cerberus's Reach?
To Tartarus?—to Tænarus?—to Perdition?
Bac.—Yes, I.
Char. Get in then.
Bac.—(hesitatingly). Tell me, where are you going?
To Perdition really—?
Char.—(not sarcastically, but civilly in the way of business).
Yes, to oblige you, I will
With all my heart—Step in there.
Bac. Have a care!
Take care, good Charon!—Charon, have a care!
(Bacchus gets into the boat.
Come, Xanthias, come!
Char. I take no slaves aboard
Except they've volunteer'd for the naval victory.
Xan.—I could not—I was suffering with sore eyes.
Char.—You must trudge away then, round by the end of the lake there.
Xan.—And whereabouts shall I wait?
Char.— At the Stone of Repentance,
By the Slough of Despond beyond the Tribulations;
You understand me?
Xan. Yes, I undestand you;
A lucky, promising direction, truly.
Char.—(to Bac.) Sit down at the oar—Come quick, if there's more coming!
(To Bac. again) Holloh! what's that you're doing?
(Bacchus is seated in a buffoonish attitude on the side of the boat where the oar was fastened.
Bac. What you told me.
I'm sitting at the oar.
Char. Sit there, I tell you,
You Fatguts; that's your place.
Bac.—(changes his place).— Well, so I do.
Char.—Now ply your hands and arms.
Bac.—(makes a silly motion with his arms).— Well, so I do.

Char.—You'd best leave off your fooling. Take to the oar,
And pull away.
Bac. But how shall I contrive?
I've never served on board—I'm only a landsman;
I'm quite unused to it—
Char. We can manage it.
As soon as you begin you shall have some music
That will teach you to keep time.
Bac. What music's that?
Char.—A chorus of Frogs—uncommon musical Frogs.
Bac.—Well, give me the word and the time.
Char.— Whooh up, up; whooh up, up.

CHORUS OF FROGS

CHORUS

Brekeke-kesh, koash, koash,
Shall the Choral Quiristers of the Marsh
Be censured and rejected as hoarse and harsh;
And their Chromatic essays
Deprived of praise?
No, let us raise afresh
Our obstreperous Brekeke-kesh;
The customary croak and cry
Of the creatures
At the theatres,
In their yearly revelry,
Brekeke-kesh, koash, koash.
Bac.—(rowing in great misery).
How I'm maul'd,
How I'm gall'd;
Worn and mangled to a mash—
There they go! "Koash, koash!"—
Frogs.— Brekeke-kesh, koash, koash.
Bac.— Oh, beshrew,
All your crew;
You don't consider how I smart.
Frogs.— Now for a sample of the Art!
Brekeke-kesh, koash, koash.
Bac.— I wish you hang'd, with all my heart.
—Have you nothing else to say?
"Brekeke-kesh, koash" all day!
Frogs.— We've a right,
We've a right;
And we croak at ye for spite.

We've a right,
We've a right;
Day and night,
Day and night;
Night and day,
Still to creak and croak away.
Phœbus and every Grace
Admire and approve of the croaking race;
And the egregious guttural notes.
That are gargled and warbled in their lyrical throats.
In reproof
Of your scorn
Mighty Pan
Nods his horn;
Beating time
To the rhyme
With his hoof,
With his hoof.
Persisting in our plan,
We proceed as we began,
Breke-kesh, Breke-kesh,
Kooash, kooash.

Bac.— Oh, the Frogs, consume and rot 'em,
I've a blister on my bottom.
Hold your tongues, you tuneful creatures.

Frogs.— Cease with your profane entreaties
All in vain for ever striving:
Silence is against our natures.
With the vernal heat reviving,
Our aquatic crew repair
From their periodic sleep,
In the dark and chilly deep,
To the cheerful upper air;
Then we frolic here and there
All midst the meadows fair;
Shady plants of asphodel,
Are the lodges where we dwell;
Chaunting in the leafy bowers
All the livelong summer hours,
Till the sudden gusty showers
Send us headlong, helter, skelter,
To the pool to seek for shelter;
Meagre, eager, leaping, lunging,
From the sedgy wharfage plunging
To the tranquil depth below,

There we muster all a-row;
Where, secure from toil and trouble,
With a tuneful hubble-bubble,
Our symphonious accents flow.
Brekeke-kesh, koash, koash.

Bac.— I forbid you to proceed.

Frogs.—That would be severe indeed;
Arbitrary, bold, and rash—
Brekeke-kesh, koash, koash.

Bac.— I command you to desist—
—Oh, my back, there! oh, my wrist!
What a twist!
What a sprain!

Frogs.—Once again—
We renew the tuneful strain.
Brekeke-kesh, koash, koash.

Bac.—I disdain—(Hang the pain!)
All your nonsense, noise, and trash.
Oh, my blister! Oh, my sprain!

Frogs.—Brekeke-kesh, koash, koash.
Friends and Frogs, we must display
All our power of voice to-day;
Suffer not this stranger here,
With fastidious foreign ear,
To confound us and abash.
Brekeke-kesh, koash, koash.

Bac.— Well, my spirit is not broke,
If it's only for the joke,
I'll outdo you with a croak.
Here it goes—(very loud) "Koash, koash."

Frogs.—Now for a glorious croaking crash, (Still louder.—
Brekeke-kesh, koash, koash.

Bac.—(splashing with his oar).
I'll disperse you with a splash.

Frogs.—Brekeke-kesh, koash, koash.

Bac.— I'll subdue
Your rebellious, noisy crew—
—Have amongst you there, slap-dash. (Strikes at them.

Frogs.—Brekeke-kesh, koash, koash.
We defy your oar and you.

Char.—Hold! We're ashore just—shift your oar. Get out.
—Now pay for your fare.

Bac. There—there it is—the twopence.

CHARON returns. BACCHUS, finding himself alone and in a strange place, begins to call out

Bac.—Hoh, Xanthias! Xanthias, I say! Where's Xanthias?
Xan.—A-hoy!
Bac.— Come here.
Xan. I'm glad to see you, master.
Bac.—What's that before us there?
Xan.— The mire and darkness.
Bac.—Do you see the villains and the perjurers
That he told us of?
Xan.— Yes, plain enough, don't you?
Bac.—Ah! now I see them, indeed, quite plain—and now too.
(Turning to the audience.
Well, what shall we do next?
Xan. We'd best move forward;
For here's the place that Hercules there inform'd us
Was haunted by those monsters.
Bac. Oh, Confound him!
He vapour'd and talk'd at random to deter me
From venturing. He's amazingly conceited
And jealous of other people, is Hercules;
He reckon'd I should rival him, and, in fact
(Since I've come here so far), I should rather like
To meet with an adventure in some shape.
Xan.—By Jove! and I think I hear a kind of a noise.
Bac.—Where? where?
Xan. There, just behind us.
Bac. Go behind, then.
Xan.—There!—it's before us now.—There!
Bac. Go before, then.
Xan.—Ah! now I see it—a monstrous beast indeed!
Bac.—What kind?
Xan. A dreadful kind—all kinds at once.
It changes and transforms itself about
To a mule and an ox,—and now to a beautiful creature;
A woman!
Bac. Where? where is she? Let me seize her.
Xan.—But now she's turned to a mastiff all of a sudden.
Bac.—It's the Weird hag! the Vampyre!
Xan.—(collectedly). Like enough.
She's all of a blaze of fire about the mouth.
Bac.—(with great trepidation).
Has she got the brazen foot?
Xan.—(with cool despair). Yes, there it is—

By Jove!—and the cloven hoof to the other leg,
Distinct enough—that's she!
Bac. But what shall I do?
Xan.—And I, too?
(Bacchus runs to the front of the stage, where there was a seat of honour appropriated to the priest of Bacchus.
Bac. Save me, Priest, protect and save me,
That we may drink and be jolly together hereafter.
Xan.—We're ruin'd, Master Hercules.
Bac. Don't call me so, I beg:
Don't mention my name, good friend, upon any account.
Xan.—Well BACCHUS, then!
Bac. That's worse, ten thousand times.
(Bacchus remains hiding his face before the seat of the priest—in the meantime affairs take a more favourable turn.
Xan.—(cheerfully). Come, master, move along—Come, come this way.
Bac.—(without looking around).
What's happened?
Xan.— Why we're prosperous and victorious:
The storm of fear and danger has subsided,
And (as the actor said the other day)
"Has only left a gentle *qualm* behind."
The Vampyre's vanish'd.
Bac. Has she? upon your oath?
Xan.—By Jove! she has.
Bac. No, swear again.
Xan. By Jove!
Bac.—Is she, by Jupiter?
Xan. By Jupiter!
Bac.—Oh dear; what a fright I was in with the very sight of her:
It turned me sick and pale—but see, the priest here!
He has colour'd up quite with the same alarm.
—What has brought me to this pass?—It must be Jupiter
With his "Chamber in the Skies," and the "Foot of Time."
(A flute sounds. Bacchus remains absorbed and inattentive to the objects about him.
Xan.—Holloh, you!
Bac. What?
Xan. Why, did you not hear?
Bac. Why, what?
Xan.—The sound of a flute.
Bac.—(recollecting himself). Indeed! And there's a smell too;

A pretty mystical ceremonious smell
Of torches. We'll watch here, and keep quite quiet.

CHORUS: OF VOTARIES, BACCHUS, XANTHIAS

CHORUS.—Shouting and Singing

Iacchus! Iacchus! Ho!
Iacchus! Iacchus! Ho!

Xan.—There, Master, there they are, the initiated;
All sporting about as he told us we should find 'em.
They're singing in praise of Bacchus like Diagoras.
Bac.—Indeed, and so they are; but we'll keep quiet
Till we make them out a little more distinctly.

CHORUS.—Song

Mighty Bacchus! Holy Power!
Hither at the wonted hour
Come away,
Come away,
With the wanton holiday,
Where the revel uproar leads
To the mystic holy meads,
Where the frolic votaries fly,
With a tipsy shout and cry;
Flourishing the Thyrsus high,
Flinging forth, alert and airy,
To the sacred old vagary,
The tumultuous dance and song,
Sacred from the vulgar throng;
Mystic orgies, that are known
To the votaries alone—
To the mystic chorus solely—
Secret—unreveal'd—and holy.

Xan.—Oh glorious virgin, daughter of the goddess!
What a scent of roasted griskin reach'd my senses.
Bac.—Keep quiet—and watch for a chance of a piece of the haslets.

CHORUS.—Song

Raise the fiery torches high!
Bacchus is approaching nigh,
Like the planet of the morn,
Breaking with the hoary dawn,
On the dark solemnity—

There they flash upon the sight;
All the plain is blazing bright,
Flush'd and overflown with light:
Age has cast his years away,
And the cares of many a day,
Sporting to the lively lay—
Mighty Bacchus! march and lead
(Torch in hand toward the mead)
Thy devoted humble Chorus,
Mighty Bacchus—move before us!

SEMICHORUS

Keep silence—keep peace—and let all the profane
From our holy solemnity duly refrain;
Whose souls unenlightened by taste, are obscure;
Whose poetical notions are dark and impure;
Whose theatrical conscience
Is sullied by nonsense;
Who never were train'd by the mighty Cratinus
In mystical orgies poetic and vinous;
Who delight in buffooning and jests out of season;
Who promote the designs of oppression and treason;
Who foster sedition, and strife, and debate;
All traitors, in short, to the stage and the state;
Who surrender a fort, or in private, export
To places and harbours of hostile resort,
Clandestine consignments of cables and pitch;
In the way that Thorycion grew to be rich
From a scoundrelly dirty collector of tribute:
All such we reject and severely prohibit:
All statesmen retrenching the fees and the salaries
Of theatrical bards, in revenge for the railleries,
And jests, and lampoons, of this holy solemnity,
Profanely pursuing their personal enmity,
For having been flouted, and scoff'd, and scorn'd,
All such are admonish'd and heartily warn'd;
We warn them once,
We warn them twice,
We warn and admonish—we warn them thrice,
To conform to the law,
To retire and withdraw;
While the Chorus again with the formal saw
(Fixt and assign'd to the festive day)
Move to the measure and march away.

SEMICHORUS

March! march! lead forth,
Lead forth manfully,
March in order all;
Bustling, hustling, justling,
As it may befall;
Flocking, shouting, laughing,
Mocking, flouting, quaffing,
One and all;
All have had a belly-full
Of breakfast brave and plentiful;
Therefore
Evermore
With your voices and your bodies
Serve the goddess,
And raise
Songs of praise;
She shall save the country still,
And save it against the traitor's will;
So she says.

SEMICHORUS

Now let us raise, in a different strain,
The praise of the goddess the giver of grain
Imploring her favour
With other behaviour,
In measures more sober, submissive, and graver.

SEMICHORUS

Ceres, holy patroness,
Condescend to mark and bless,
With benevolent regard,
Both the Chorus and the Bard;
Grant them with the present play
Many things to sing and say,
Follies intermix'd with sense;
Folly, but without offence.
Grant them with the present play
To bear the prize of verse away.

SEMICHORUS

Now call again, and with a different measure,
The power of mirth and pleasure;

The florid, active Bacchus, bright and gay,
To journey forth and join us on the way.

SEMICHORUS

O Bacchus, attend! the customary patron
Of every lively lay;
Go forth without delay
Thy wonted annual way,
To meet the ceremonious holy matron:
Her grave procession gracing,
Thine airy footsteps tracing
With unlaborious, light, celestial motion;
And here at thy devotion
Behold thy faithful quire
In pitiful attire;
All overworn and ragged,
This jerkin old and jagged,
These buskins torn and burst,
Though sufferers in the fray,
May serve us at the worst
To sport throughout the day;
And there within the shades,
I spy some lovely maids;
With whom we romp'd and revell'd,
Dismantled and dishevell'd;
With their bosoms open,
With whom we might be coping.

Xan. Well, I was always hearty,
Disposed to mirth and ease,
I'm ready to join the party.

Bac. *(with a tone of imbecility, like Sir Andrew Aguecheek's "Yes, and I too"—"Ay or I either").*
And I will, if you please.

BACCHUS *(to the* CHORUS).

Prithee, my good fellows,
Would you please to tell us
Which is Pluto's door,
I'm an utter stranger,
Never here before.

CHORUS

Friend, you're out of danger,
You need not seek it far;

There it stands before ye,
Before ye, where you are.

Bac. Take up your bundles, Xanthias.
Xan. Hang all bundles;
A bundle has no end, and these have none.
(Exeunt Bacchus and Xanthias.

SEMICHORUS

Now we go to dance and sing
In the consecrated shades;
Round the secret holy ring,
With the matrons and the maids.
Thither I must haste to bring
The mysterious early light;
Which must witness every rite
Of the joyous happy night.

SEMICHORUS

Let us hasten—let us fly—
Where the lovely meadows lie;
Where the living waters flow;
Where the roses bloom and blow.
—Heirs of immortality,
Segregated, safe and pure,
Easy, sorrowless, secure;
Since our earthly course is run,
We behold a brighter sun.
Holy lives—a holy vow—
Such rewards await them now.

Scene. The Gate of Pluto's Palace

Enter BACCHUS *and* XANTHIAS

Bac.—(going up to the door with considerable hesitation).
Well, how must I knock at the door now? Can't ye tell me?
How do the native inhabitants knock at doors?
Xan.—Pah; don't stand fooling there; but smite it smartly,
With the very spirit and air of Hercules.
Bac.—Holloh!
Æacus (from within, with the voice of a royal and infernal *porter).*
Who's there?
Bac. (with a forced voice). 'Tis I, the valiant Hercules!

Æacus (coming out).
Thou brutal, abominable, detestable,
Vile, villainous, infamous, nefarious scoundrel!
—How durst thou, villain as thou wert, to seize
Our watch-dog, Cerberus, whom I kept and tended
Hurrying him off, half-strangled in your grasp?
—But now, be sure we have you safe and fast,
Miscreant and villain!—Thee, the Stygian cliffs,
With stern adamantine durance, and the rocks
Of inaccessible Acheron, red with gore,
Environ and beleaguer; and the watch,
And swift pursuit of the hideous hounds of hell;
And the horrible Hydra, with her hundred heads,
Whose furious ravening fangs shall rend and tear thee;
Wrenching thy vitals forth, with the heart and midriff;
While inexpressible Tartesian monsters,
And grim Tithrasian Gorgons toss and scatter
With clattering claws, thine intertwined intestines.
To them, with instant summons, I repair,
Moving in hasty march with steps of speed.
(Æacus departs with a tremendous tragical exit, and Bacchus falls to the ground in a fright.

Xan.—Holloh, you! What's the matter there—?
Bac. Oh dear,
I've had an accident.
Xan. Poh! poh! jump up!
Come! you ridiculous simpleton! don't lie there,
The people will see you.
Bac. Indeed I'm sick at heart; lah!
(Here a few lines are omitted).
Xan.—Was there ever in heaven or earth such a coward?
Bac. Me?
A coward! Did not I show my presence of mind—
And call for a sponge and water in a moment?
Would a coward have done that?
Xan. What else would he do?
Bac.—He'd have lain there stinking like a nasty coward;
But I jump'd up at once, like a lusty wrestler,
And look'd about, and wiped myself, withal.
Xan.—Most manfully done!
Bac. By Jove, and I think it was,
But tell me, wer'n't you frighten'd with that speech?
—Such horrible expressions!
Xan. (cooly, but with conscious and intentional coolness).
No, not I;

I took no notice—
Bac. Well, I'll tell you what,
Since you're such a valiant-spirited kind of fellow,
Do you be *Me*—with the club and the lion-skin,
Now you're in this courageous temper of mind;
And I'll go take my turn and carry the bundles.
Xan.—Well—give us hold—I must humour you, forsooth;
Make haste (he changes his dress), and now behold the
Xanthian Hercules,
And mind if I don't display more heart and spirit.
Bac.—Indeed, and you look the character, completely,
Like that heroic Melitensian hangdog—
Come, now for my bundles. I must mind my bundles.

Enter PROSERPINE'S SERVANT MAID *(a kind of Dame Quickly), who immediately addresses* XANTHIAS

Dear Hercules. Well, you're come at last. Come in,
For the goddess, as soon as she heard of it, set to work
Baking peck loaves and frying stacks of pancakes,
And making messes of furmety; there's an ox
Besides, she has roasted whole, with a relishing stuffing,
If you'll only just step in this way.
Xan.—(with dignity and reserve). I thank you,
I'm equally obliged.
Ser.-Maid. No, no, by Jupiter!
We must not let you off, indeed. There's wild fowl
And sweetmeats for the dessert, and the best of wine;
Only walk in.
Xan.—(as before).—I thank you. You'll excuse me.
Ser.-Maid—No, no, we can't excuse you, indeed we can't;
There are dancing and singing girls besides.
Xan.—(with dissembled emotion). What! dancers?
Ser.-Maid.—Yes, that there are; the sweetest, charmingest
things
That you ever saw—and there's the cook this moment
Is dishing up the dinner.
Xan.—(with an air of lofty condescension). Go before then,
And tell the girls—those singing girls you mentioned—
To prepare for my approach in person presently.
(To Bacchus.) You, sirrah! follow behind me with the
bundles.
Bac.—Holloh, you! what, do you take the thing in earnest,
Because, for a joke, I drest you like Hercules?
(Xanthias continues to gesticulate as Hercules.

Come, don't stand fooling, Xanthias. You'll provoke me.
There, carry the bundles, Sirrah, when I bid you.
Xan.—(relapsing at once into his natural air).
Why, sure? do you mean to take the things away
That you gave me yourself of your own accord this instant?
Bac.—I never mean a thing; I do it at once.
Let go of the lion's skin directly, I tell you.
Xan.—(resigning his heroical insignia with a tragical air and tone).
To you, just Gods, I make my last appeal,
Bear witness!
Bac.— What! the Gods?—do you think they mind you?
How could you take it in your head, I wonder;
Such a foolish fancy for a fellow like you,
A mortal and a slave, to pass for Hercules?
Xan.—There. Take them.—There—you may have them—but, please God,
You may come to want my help some time or other.

CHORUS

Dexterous and wily wits,
Find their own advantage ever;
For the wind where'er it sits,
Leaves a berth secure and clever
To the ready navigator;
That foresees and knows the nature,
Of the wind and weather's drift;
And betimes can turn and shift
To the sheltered easy side;
'Tis a practice proved and tried,
Not to wear a formal face;
Fixt in attitude and place,
Like an image on its base;
'Tis the custom of the seas,
Which, as all the world agrees,
Justifies Theramenes

BACCHUS

How ridiculous and strange;
What a monstrous proposition,
That I should condescend to change
My dress, my name, and my condition.
To follow Xanthias, and behave
Like a mortal and a slave;

To be set to watch the door
While he wallow'd with his whore,
Tumbling on a purple bed;
While I waited with submission,
To receive a broken head;
Or be kick'd upon suspicion
Of impertinence and peeping
At the joys that he was reaping.

Enter Two WOMEN, *Sutlers or Keepers of an Eating House*

1st Woman.—What, Platana! Goody Platana! there that's he,
The fellow that robs and cheats poor victuallers;
That came to our house and eat those nineteen loaves.
2nd Woman.—Ay, sure enough that's he, the very man.
Xan.—(tauntingly to Bacchus). There's mischief in the wind for somebody!
1st Woman.—And a dozen and a half of cutlets and fried chops,
At a penny halfpenny a piece—
Xan. (significantly). There are pains and penalties Impending—
1st Woman.—And all the garlic: such a quantity
As he swallowed—
Bac.—(delivers this speech with Herculean dignity, after his fashion; having hitherto remained silent upon the same principle).
Woman, you're beside yourself;
You talk you know not what—
2nd Woman. No, no! you reckoned
I should not know you again with them there buskins.
1st Woman.—Good lack! and there was all that fish besides.
Indeed—with the pickle, and all—and the good green cheese
That he gorged at once, with the rind, and the rush-baskets;
And then, when I called for payment, he looked fierce,
And stared at me in the face, and grinned, and roared—
Xan.—Just like him! That's the way wherever he goes.
1st Woman.—and snatched his sword out, and behaved like mad.
Xan.—Poor souls! you suffered sadly!
1st Woman.— Yes, indeed;
And then we both ran off with the fright and terror,
And scrambled into the loft beneath the roof;
And he took up two rugs and stole them off.
Xan.—Just like him again—but something must be done.
Go call me Cleon, he's my advocate.

2nd Woman.—And Hyperbolus, if you meet him send his here.
He's mine; and we'll demolish him, I warrant.
1st Woman (going close up to Bacchus in the true termagant attitude of rage and defiance, with the arms akimbo, and a neck and chin thrust out).
How I should like to strike those ugly teeth out
With a good big stone, you ravenous greedy villain!
You gormandising villain! that I should—
Yes, that I should; your wicked ugly fangs
That have eaten up my substance, and devoured me.
Bac.—And I could toss you into the public pit
With the malefactor's carcasses; that I could,
With pleasure and satisfaction; that I could.
1st Woman.—And I should like to rip that gullet out
With a reaping hook that swallowed all my tripe,
And liver and lights—but I'll fetch Cleon here,
And he shall summon him. He shall settle him,
And have it out of him this very day.
(Exeunt 1st and 2nd Woman.
Bac.—(in a pretended soliloquy).
I love poor Xanthias dearly, that I do;
I wish I might be hanged else.
Xan. Yes, I know—
I know your meaning—No; more of that,
I won't act Hercules—
Bac. Now pray don't say so,
My little Xanthias.
Xan.— How should I be Hercules?
A mortal and a slave, a fellow like me?—
Bac.—I know you're angry, and you've a right to be angry;
And if you beat me for it I'd not complain;
But if ever I strip you again, from this time forward,
I wish I may be utterly confounded,
With my wife, my children, and my family,
And the blear-eyed Archedemus into the bargain.
Xan.—I agree then, on that oath, and those conditions.
(Xanthias equips himself with the club and lion's skin, and Bacchus resumes his bundles.

CHORUS *(addressing* XANTHIAS*)*

Now that you revive and flourish
In your old attire again,
You must rouse afresh and nourish
Thoughts of a heroic strain;

That exalt and raise the figure,
And assume a fire and vigour;
And an attitude and air
Suited to the garb you wear;
With a brow severely bent,
Like the god you represent.
But beware,
Have a care!
If you blunder, or betray
Any weakness any way;
Weakness of the heart or brain,
We shall see you once again
Trudging in the former track,
With the bundles at your back.

XANTHIAS *(in reply to the* CHORUS)

Friends, I thank you for your care;
Your advice was good and fair;
Corresponding in its tone
With reflections of my own.
—Though I clearly comprehend
All the upshot and the end
(That if any good comes of it,
Any pleasure any profit—
He, my master, will recede
From the terms that were agreed),
You shall see me, notwithstanding,
Stern, intrepid, and commanding.
Now's the time: For there's a noise!
Now for figure, look, and voice!

ÆACUS enters again as a regular executioner of the law, with suitable understrappers in attendance

Æacus.—Arrest me there that fellow that stole the dog.
There!—Pinion him!—Quick!
Bac.—(tauntingly to Xanthias). There's somebody in a scrape.
Xan.—(in a menacing attiture). Keep off, and be hanged.
Æacus. Oh, hoh! do you mean to fight for it?
Here! Pardokas and Skeblias, and the rest of ye,
Make up to the rogue, and settle him. Come, be quick.
(A scuffle ensues, in which Xanthias succeeds in obliging Æacus's runners to keep their distance.
Bac.—(mortified at Xanthias's prowess).
Well, is not this quite monstrous and outrageous,

To steal the dog, and then to make an assault
In justification of it.
Xan.—(triumphantly and ironically). Quite outrageous!
Æacus (gravely, and dissembling his mortification).
An aggravated case!
Xan.—(with candour and gallantry). Well, now—by Jupiter,
May I die; but I never saw this place before—
Nor ever stole the amount of a farthing from you:
Nor a hair of your dog's tail—But you shall see now,
I'll settle all this business nobly and fairly.
—This slave of mine—you may take and torture him;
And if you make out anything against me,
You may take and put me to death for aught I care.
Æacus (in an obliging tone, softened into deference and civility by the liberality of Xanthias's proposal).
But which way would you please to have him tortured?
Xan.—(with a gentlemanly spirit of accomodation).
In your own way—with . . . the lash—with . . . knots and screws,
With . . . the common usual customary tortures.
With the rack—with . . . the water-torture—anyway—
With fire and vinegar—all sorts of ways.
(After a very slight pause). There's only one thing I should warn you of:
I must not have him treated like a child,
To be whipt with fennel, or with lettuce leaves.
Æacus.—That's fair—and if so be . . . he's maim'd or crippled
In any respect—the valy shall be paid you.
Xan.—Oh no!—by no means! not to me!—by no means!
You must not mention it!—Take him to the torture.
Æacus.—It had better be here, and under your own eye.
(To Bacchus.) Come you—put down your bundles and make ready.
And mind—Let me hear no lies!
Bac.— I'll tell you what:
I'd advise people not to torture me;
I give you notice—I'm a deity.
So mind now—you'll have nobody to blame
But your own self—
Æacus. What's that you're saying there?
Bac.—Why that I'm Bacchus, Jupiter's own son:
That fellow there's a slave. (Pointing to Xanthias.
Æacus (to Xanthias). Do ye hear?
Xan.— I hear him—
A reason the more to give him a good beating;

If he's immortal he need never mind it.
Bac.—Why should not you be beat as well as I then,
If you're immortal, as you say you are?
Xan.—Agreed—and him, the first that you see flinching,
Or seeming to mind it at all, you may set him down
For an imposter and no real deity.
Æacus (to Xanthias with warmth and cordiality).
Ah, you're a worthy gentleman I'll be bound for't;
You're all for the truth and the proof. Come—Strip there both o' ye.
Xan.—But how can ye put us to the question fairly,
Upon equal terms?
Æacus (in the tone of a person proposing a convenient, agreeable arrangement). Oh, easily enough,
Conveniently enough—a lash a piece,
Each in your turn; you can have 'em one by one.
Xan.—That's right. (Putting himself in an attitude to receive the blow). Now mind if ye see me flinch or swerve.
Æacus (strikes him, but without producing any expression of pain).
I've struck.
Xan.— Not you!
Æacus. Why it seems as I had not
I'll smite this other fellow. (Strikes Bacchus.
Bac.—(pretending not to feel). When will you do it?
Oh dear (and immediately subjoins) Companions of my youthful years.
Xan.—(to Æacus). Did ye hear? he made an outcry.
Æacus. what was that?
Bac.—A favourite passage from Archilochus.
(Xanthias receives a blow, and exclaims)
O Jupiter! (and subjoins) that on the Idean height;
(and contends that he has been repeating the first line of a well-known hymn. Æacus at length gives the matter up).
Well, after all my pains, I'm quite at a loss
To discover which is the true, real deity.
By the Holy Goddess—I'm completely puzzled;
I must take you before Proserpine and Pluto,
Being gods themselves they're likeliest to know.
Bac.—Why, that's a lucky thought. I only wish
It had happen'd to occur before you beat us.

CHORUS

Muse, attend our solemn summons
And survey the assembled commons,

Congregated as they sit,
An enormous mass of wit,
—Full of genius, taste, and fire,
Jealous pride, and critic ire—
Cleophon among the rest
(Like the swallow from her nest,
A familiar foreign bird),
Chatters loud and will be heard,
(With the accent and the grace
Which he brought with him from Thrace);
But we fear the tuneful strain
Will be turn'd to grief and pain;
He must sing a dirge perforce
When his trial takes its course;
We shall hear him moan and wail,
Like the plaintive nightingale.

EPIRREMA

It behoves the sacred Chorus, and of right to them belongs,
To suggest the best advice in their addresses and their songs,
In performance of our office, we present with all humility
A proposal for removing groundless fears and disability.
First that all that were inveigled into Phrynichus's treason,
Should be suffer'd and received by rules of evidence and reason
To clear their conduct—Secondly, that none of our Athenian race
Should live suspected and subjected to loss of franchise and disgrace,
Feeling it a grievous scandal when a single naval fight
Renders foreigners and slaves partakers of the city's right:
—Not that we condemn the measure; we conceived it wisely done,
As a just and timely measure, and the first and only one:
—But your kinsmen and your comrades, those with whom you fought and bore
Danger, hardship, and fatigue, or with their fathers long before,
Struggling on the land and ocean, labouring with the spear and oar
—These we think, as they profess repentance for their past behaviour,
Might, by your exalted wisdoms, be received to grace and favour.
Better it would be, believe us, casting off revenge and pride,
To receive as friends and kinsmen all that combat on our side
Into full and equal franchise: on the other hand we fear,
If your hearts are filled with fancies, haughty, captious, and severe:
While the shock of instant danger threatens shipwreck to the state,
Such resolves will be lamented and repented of too late.

If the Muse foresees at all
What in future will befall

Dirty Cleigenes the small—
He, the sovereign of the bath,
Will not long escape from scath;
But must perish by and by,
With his potash and his lye;
With his realm and dynasty,
His terraqueous scouring ball,
And his washes, one and all;
Therefore he can never cease
To declaim against a peace.

ANTEPIRREMA

Often times have we reflected on a similar abuse,
In the choice of men for office, and of coins for common use;
For your old and standard pieces, valued, and approved, and tried,
Here among the Grecian nations, and in all the world beside;
Recognised in every realm for trusty stamp and pure assay,
Are rejected and abandon'd for the trash of yesterday;
For a vile, adulterate issue, drossy, counterfeit, and base,
Which the traffic of the city passes current in their place!
And the men that stood for office, noted for acknowledged worth,
And for manly deeds of honour, and for honourable birth;
Train'd in exercise and art, in sacred dances and in song,
All are ousted and supplanted by a base ignoble throng;
Paltry stamp and vulgar mettle raise them to command and place,
Brazen counterfeit pretenders, scoundrels of a scoundrel race;
Whom the state in former ages scarce would have allow'd to stand,
At the sacrifice of outcasts, as the scape-goats of the land.
—Time it is—and long has been, renouncing all your follies past,
To recur to sterling merit and intrinsic worth at last.
—If we rise, we rise with honour; if we fall, it must be so!
—But there was an ancient saying, which we all have heard and know,
That the wise, in dangerous cases, have esteem'd it safe and good
To receive a slight chastisement from a wand of noble wood.

Scene. XANTHIAS *and* ÆACUS

Æacus.—By Jupiter; but he's a gentleman,
That master of yours.
Xan.— A gentleman! To be sure he is;
Why, he does nothing else but wench and drink.
Æacus.—His never striking you when you took his name—
Outfacing him and contradicting him!—
Xan.—It might have been worse for him if he had.

Æacus.—Well, that's well spoken, like a true-bred slave.
It's just the sort of language I delight in.
Xan.—You love excuses?
Æacus.— Yes; but I prefer
Cursing my master quietly in private.
Xan.—Mischief you're fond of?
Æacus.— Very fond indeed.
Xan.—What think ye of muttering as you leave the room
After a beating?
Æacus.— Why, that's pleasant too.
Xan.—By Jove, is it! But listening at the door
To hear their secrets?
Æacus.— Oh, there's nothing like it.
Xan.—And then the reporting them in the neighbourhood.
Æacus.—That's beyond everything.—That's quite ecstatic.
Xan.—Well, give me your hand. And, there, take mine—and buss me.
And there again—and now for Jupiter's sake!—
(For he's the patron of our cuffs and beatings)
Do tell me what's that noise of people quarrelling
And abusing one another there within?
Æacus.—Æschylus and Euripides, only!
Xan.— Heh?—?—?
Æacus.—Why, there's a desperate business has broke out
Among these here dead people;—quite a tumult.
Xan.—As how?
Æacus.— First, there's a custom we have establish'd
In favour of professors of the arts.
When any one, the first in his own line,
Comes down amongst us here, he stands entitled
To privilege and precedence, with a seat
At Pluto's royal board.
Xan.— I understand you.
Æacus.—So he maintains it, till there comes a better
Of the same sort, and then resigns it up.
Xan.—But why should Æschylus be disturb'd at this?
Æacus.—He held the seat for tragedy, as the master
In that profession.
Xan.— Well, and who's there now?
Æacus.—He kept it till Euripides appeared;
But he collected audiences about him,
And flourish'd, and exhibited, and harangued
Before the thieves, and housebreakers, and rogues,
Cut-purses, cheats, and vagabonds, and villains,

That make the mass of population here;
(Pointing to the audience.
And they—being quite transported, and delighted
With his equivocations and evasions,
His subtleties and niceties and quibbles—
In short—they raised an uproar, and declared him
Arch-poet, by a general acclamation.
And he with this grew proud and confident,
And laid a claim to the seat where Æschylus sat.

Xan.—And did not he get pelted for his pains?

Æacus (with the dry concise importance of superior local information).
Why, no—The mob call'd out, and it was carried,
To have a public trial of skill between them.

Xan.—You mean the mob of scoundrels that you mention'd?

Æacus.—Scoundrels indeed! Ay, scoundrels without number.

Xan.—But Æschylus must have had good friends and hearty?

Æacus.—Yes; but good men are scarce both here and elsewhere.

Xan.—Well, what has Pluto settled to be done?

Æacus.—To have an examination and a trial
In public.

Xan.— But how comes it?—Sophocles?—
Why does he not put forth his claim amongst them?

Æacus.—No, no!—He's not the kind of man—not he!
I tell ye; the first moment that he came,
He went up to Æschylus and saluted him
And kiss'd his cheek and took his hand quite kindly;
And Æschylus edged a little from his seat
To give him room; so now the story goes,
(At least I had it from Cleidemides;)
He means to attend there as a stander-by,
Proposing to take up the conqueror;
If Æschylus gets the better, well and good,
He gives up his pretensions—but if not,
He'll stand a trial, he says, against Euripides.

Xan.—There'll be strange doings.

Æacus.— That there will—and shortly
—Here—in this place—strange things, I promise you;
A kind of thing that no man could have thought of;
Why, you'll see poetry weigh'd out and measured.

Xan.—What, will they bring their tragedies to the steel-yards?

Æacus.—Yes, will they—with their rules and compasses
They'll measure, and examine, and compare,
And bring their plummets, and their lines and levels,
To take the bearings—for Euripides

Says that he'll make a survey, word by word.
Xan.—Æschylus takes the thing to heart, I doubt.
Æacus.—He bent his brows and pored upon the ground; I saw him.
Xan.— Well, but who decides the business?
Æacus.—Why, there the difficulty lies—for judges,
True learned judges, are grown scarce, and Æschylus
Objected to the Athenians absolutely.
Xan.—Considering them as rogues and villains mostly.
Æacus.—As being ignorant and empty generally;
And in their judgment of the stage particularly.
In fine, they've fix'd upon that master of yours,
As having had some practice in the business.
But we must wait within—for when our masters
And warm and eager, stripes and blows ensue.

CHORUS

The full-mouth'd master of the tragic quire,
We shall behold him foam with rage and ire;
—Confronting in the list
His eager, shrewd, sharp-tooth'd antagonist.
Then will his visual orbs be wildly whirl'd
And huge investives will be hurl'd
Superb and supercilious,
Atrocious, atrabilious,
With furious gesture and with lips of foam,
And lion crest unconscious of the comb;
Erect with rage—his brow's impending gloom
O'ershadowing his dark eyes' terrific blaze.
The opponent, dexterous and wary,
Will fend and parry:
While masses of conglomerated phrase,
Enormous, ponderous, and pedantic,
With indignation frantic,
And strength and force gigantic,
Are desperately sped
At his devoted head—
Then in different style
The touchstone and the file,
And subleties of art
In turn will play their part;
Analysis and rule,
And every modern tool;
With critic scratch and scribble,

And nice invidious nibble;
Contending for the important choice,
A vast expenditure of human voice!

Scene. EURIPIDES, BACCHUS, ÆSCHYLUS

Eur.—Don't give me your advice, I claim the seat
As being better and superior artist.
Bac.—What, Æschylus, don't you speak? you hear his language.
Eur.—He's mustering up a grand commanding visage
—A silent attitude—the common trick
That he begins with in his tragedies.
Bac.—Come, have a care, my friend—You'll say too much.
Eur.—I know the man of old—I've scrutinised
And shown him long ago for what he is,
A rude unbridled tongue, a haughty spirit;
Proud, arrogant, and insilently pompous;
Rough, clownish, boisterous, and overbearing.
Æs.—Say'st thou me so? Thou bastard of the earth,
With thy patch'd robes and rags of sentiment,
Raked from the streets and stitch'd and tack'd together!
Thou mumping, whining, beggarly hypocrite!
But you shall pay for it.
Bac.—(in addressing Æschylus attempts to speak in more elevated style). There now, Æschylus,
You grow too warm. Restrain your ireful mood.
Æs.—Yes; but I'll seize that sturdy beggar first,
And search and strip him bare of his pretensions.
Bac.—Quick! Quick! A sacrifice to the winds—Make ready;
The storm of rage is gathering. Bring a victim.
Æs.—A wretch that has corrupted everything;
Our music with his melodies from Crete;
Our morals with incestuous tragedies.
Bac.—Dear, worthy Æschylus, contain yourself,
And as for you, Euripides, move off
This instant, if you're wise; I give you warning.
Or else, with one of his big thumping phrases,
You'll get your brains dash'd out, and all your notions
And sentiments and matter mash'd to pieces.
—And thee, most noble Æschylus (as above), I beseech
With mild demeanour calm and affable
To hear and answer.—For it ill beseems
Illustrious bards to scold like market-women.
But you roar out and bellow like a furnace.
Eur.—(in the tone of a town blackguard working himself up for a quarrel).

I'm up to it.—I'm resolved, and here I stand
Ready and steady—take what course you will;
Let him be first to speak, or else let me.
I'll match my plots and characters against him;
My sentiments and language, and what not:
Ay! and my music too, my Meleager,
My Æolus and my Telephus and all.

Bac.—Well, Æschylus,—Determine. What say you?

Æs.—(speaks in a tone of grave manly despondency).
I wish the place of trial had been elsewhere,
I stand at disadvantage here.

Bac.— As how?

Æs.—Because my poems live on earth above,
And his died with him, and descended here,
And are at hand as ready witnesses;
But you decide the matter: I submit.

Bac.—(with official pertness and importance).
Come—let them bring me fire and frankincense,
That I may offer vows and make oblations
For an ingenious critical conclusion
To this same elegant and clever trial—

(To the Chorus.)
And you too,—sing me a hymn there.—To the Muses.

CHORUS

To the Heavenly Nine we petition,
Ye, that on earth or in air are for ever kindly protecting the vagaries of learned ambition,
And at your ease from above our sense and folly directing (or poetical contests inspecting,
Deign to behold for a while as a scene of amusing attention, all the struggles of style and invention),
Aid, and assist, and attend, and afford to the furious authors your refined and enlighten'd suggestions;
Grant them ability—force and agility, quick recollections, and address in their answers and questions,
Pithy replies, with a word to the wise, and pulling and hauling, with inordinate uproar and bawling,
Driving and drawing, like carpenters sawing, their dramas asunder:
With suspended sense and wonder,
All are waiting and attending
On the conflict now depending!

Bac.—Come, say your prayers, you two before the trial.
(Æschylus offers incense.
Æs.—O Ceres, nourisher of my soul, maintain me
A worthy follower of thy mysteries.
Bac.—(to Euripides). There, you there, make your offering.
Eur.— Well, I will;
But I direct myself to other deities.
Bac.—Hey, what? Your own? some new ones?
Eur.— Most assuredly!
Bac.—Well! Pray away, then—to your own new deities.
(Euripides offers incense.
Eur.—Thou foodful Air, the nurse of all my notions;
And ye, the organic powers of sense and speech,
And keen refined olfactory discernment,
Assist my present search for faults and errors.

CHORUS

Here beside you, here are we,
Eager all to hear and see
This abstruse and mighty battle
Of profound and learned prattle.
—But, as it appears to me,
Thus the course of it will be;
He, the junior and appellant,
Will advance as the assailant.
Aiming shrewd satyric darts
At his rival's noble parts;
And with sallies sharp and keen
Try to wound him in the spleen,
While the veteran rends and raises
Rifted, rough, uprooted phrases,
Wielded like a threshing staff
Scattering the dust and chaff.

The metre which follows is so essentially vulgar that I am not able to recollect any line of it in English which is fit to be quoted.

Back.—Come, now begin, dispute away, but first I give you notice
That every phrase in your discourse must be refined, avoiding
Vulgar absurd comparisons, and awkward silly joking.
Eur.—At the first outset, I forbear to state my own pretensions;
Hereafter I shall mention them, when his have been refuted;
After I shall have fairly shown, how he befool'd and cheated

The rustic audience that he found, which Phrynichus bequeathed him.
He planted first upon the stage a figure veil'd and muffled,
An Achilles or a Niobe, that never show'd their faces;
But kept a tragic attitude, without a word to utter.

Bac.—No more they did: 'tis very true.

Eur.— In the meanwhile the Chorus
Strung on ten strophes right-an-end, but they remain'd in silence.

Bac.—I liked that silence well enough, as well, perhaps, or better
Than those new talking characters—

Eur.— That's from your want of judgment,
Believe me.

Bac.— Why, perhaps it is; but what was his intention?

Eur.—Why, mere conceit and insolence; to keep the people waiting
Till Niobe should deign to speak, to drive his drama forward.

Bac.—O what a rascal. Now I see the tricks he used to play me.

(To Æschylus, who is showing signs of indignation by various contortions.

—What makes you writhe and winch about?—

Eur.— Because he feels my censures.
—Then having dragg'd and drawl'd along, half-way to the conclusion,
He foisted in a dozen words of noisy boisterous accent,
With lofty plumes and shaggy brows, mere bugbears of the language.
That no man ever heard before.—

Æs.— Alas! alas!

Bac.—(to Æschylus). Have done there!

Eur.—He never used a simple word.

Bac.—(to Æschylus). Don't grind your teeth so strangely.

Eur.—But "Bulwarks and Scamanders" and "Hippogrifs and Gorgons."
"On burnish'd shields emboss'd in brass;" bloody remorseless phrases
Which nobody could understand.

Bac.— Well, I confess, for my part,
I used to keep awake at night, with guesses and conjectures
To think what kind of foreign bird he meant by griffin-horses.

Æs.—A figure on the heads of ships; you goose, you must have seen them.

Bac.—Well, from the likeness, I declare, I took it for Eruxis.

Eur.—So! Figures from the heads of ships are fit for tragic diction.

Æs.—Well then—thou paltry wretch, explain. What were your own devices?

Eur.—Not stories about flying-stags, like yours, and griffin-horses;
Nor terms nor images derived from tapestry Persian hangings.
When I received the Muse from you I found her puff'd and pamper'd
With pompous sentences and terms, a cumbrous huge virago.
My first attention was applied to make her look genteelly;
And bring her to a slighter shape by dint of lighter diet:
I fed her with plain household phrase, and cool familiar salad,
With water-gruel episode, with sentimental jelly,
With moral mincemeat; till at length I brought her into compass;
Cephisophon, who was my cook, contrived to make them relish.
I kept my plots distinct and clear, and, to prevent confusion,
My leading characters rehearsed their pedigrees for prologues.

Æs.—'Twas well, at least, that you forbore to quote your own extraction.

Eur.—From the first opening of the scene, all persons were in action;
The master spoke, the slave replied, the women, young and old ones,
All had their equal share of talk—

Æs.— Come, then, stand forth and tell us,
What forfeit less than death is due for such an innovation?

Eur.—I did it upon principle, from democratic motives.

Bac.—Take care, my friend—upon that ground your footing is but ticklish.

Eur.—I taught these youths to speechify.

Æs.— I say so too.—Moreover
I say that—for the public good—you ought to have been hang'd first.

Eur.—The rules and forms of rhetoric,—the laws of composition,
To prate—to state—and in debate to meet a question fairly:
At a dead lift to turn and shift—to make a nice distinction.

Æs.—I grant it all—I make it all—my ground of accusation.

Eur.—The whole in cases and concerns occurring and recurring
At every turn and every day domestic and familiar,
So that the audience, one and all, from personal experience,
Were competent to judge the piece, and form a fair opinion
Whether my scenes and sentiments agreed with truth and nature.
I never took them by surprise to storm their understandings,
With Memnons and Tydides's and idle rattle-trappings
Of battle-steeds and clattering shields to scare them from their senses;
But for a test (perhaps the best) our pupils and adherents
May be distinguish'd instantly by person and behaviour;
His are Phormisius the rough, Meganetes the gloomy,
Hobgoblin-headed, trumpet-mouth'd, grim-visaged, ugly-bearded;
But mine are Cleitophon the smooth,—Theramenes the gentle.

Bac.—Theramenes—a clever hand, a universal genius,
I never found him at a loss in all the turns of party
To change his watchword at a word or at a moment's warning.

Eur.—Thus it was that I began,
With a nicer, neater plan;
Teaching men to look about,
Both within doors and without;
To direct their own affairs,
And their house and household wares;
Marking everything amiss—
"Where is that? and—What is this?"
"This is broken—that is gone,"
'Tis the modern style and tone.

Bac.—Yes, by Jove—and at their homes
Nowadays each master comes,
Of a sudden bolting in
With an uproar and a din;
Rating all the servants round,
"If it's lost, it must be found.
Why was all the garlic wasted?
There, that honey has been tasted:
And these olives pilfer'd here.
Where's the pot we bought last year?
What's become of all the fish?
Which of you has broke the dish?"
Thus it is, but heretofore,

The moment that they cross'd the door,
They sat them down to doze and snore.

CHORUS

"Noble Achilles! you see the disaster,
The shame and affront, and an enemy nigh!"
Oh! bethink thee, mighty master,
Think betimes of your reply;
Yet beware, lest anger force
Your hasty chariot from the course;
Grievous charges have been heard,
With many a sharp and bitter word,
Notwithstanding, mighty chief,
Let Prudence fold her cautious reef
In your anger's swelling sail;
By degrees you may prevail,
But beware of your behaviour
Till the wind is in your favour:
Now for your answer, illustrious architect,
Founder of lofty theatrical lays!
Patron in chief of our tragical trumperies!
Open the floodgate of figure and phrase!

Æs.—My spirit is kindled with anger and shame,
To so base a competitor forced to reply,
But I needs must retort, or the wretch will report
That he left me refuted and foil'd in debate;
Tell me then, What are the principal merits
Entitling a poet to praise and renown?
Eur.—The improvement of morals, the progress of mind,
When a poet, by skill and invention,
Can render his audience virtuous and wise.
Æs.—But if you, by neglect or intention,
Have done the reverse, and from brave honest spirits
Depraved, and have left them degraded and base,
Tell me, what punishment ought you to suffer?
Bac.—Death, to be sure!—Take that answer from me.
Æs.—Observe then, and mark, what our citizens were,
When first from my care they were trusted to you;
Not scoundrel informers, or paltry buffoons,
Evading the services due to the state;
But with hearts all on fire, for adventure and war,
Distinguished for hardiness, stature, and strength,
Breathing forth nothing but lances and darts,
Arms, and equipment, and battle array,

Bucklers, and shields, and habergeons, and hauberks,
Helmets, and plumes, and heroic attire.
Bac.—There he goes, hammering on with his helmets,
He'll be the death of me one of these days.
Eur.—But how did you manage to make 'em so manly,
What was the method, the means that you took?
Bac.—Speak, Æschylus, speak, and behave yourself better,
And don't in your rage stand so silent and stern.
Æs.—A drama, brimful with heroical spirit.
Eur.—What did you call it?
Æs.— "The Chiefs against Thebes,"
That inspired each spectator with martial ambition,
Courage, and ardour, and prowess, and pride.
Bac.—But you did very wrong to encourage the Thebans.
Indeed, you deserve to be punish'd, you do,
For the Thebans are grown to be capital soldiers,
You've done us a mischief by that very thing.
Æs.—The fault was your own, if you took other courses;
The lesson I taught was directed to you:
Then I gave you the glorious theme of "the Persians,"
Replete with sublime patriotical strains,
The record and example of noble achievement,
The delight of the city, the pride of the stage.
Bac.—I rejoiced, I confess, when the tidings were carried
To old King Darius, so long dead and buried,
And the chorus in concert kept wringing their hands,
Weeping and wailing, and crying, Alas!
Æs.—Such is the duty, the task of a poet,
Fulfiling in honour his office and trust.
Look to traditional history—look
To antiquity, primitive, early, remote:
See there, what a blessing illustrious poets
Conferred on mankind, in the centuries past,
Orpheus instructed mankind in religion,
Reclaim'd them from bloodshed and barbarous rites:
Musæus deliver'd the doctrine of medicine,
And warnings prophetic for ages to come:
Next came old Hesiod, teaching us husbandry,
Ploughing, and sowing, and rural affairs,
Rural economy, rural astronomy,
Homely morality, labour, and thrift:
Homer himself, our adorable Homer,
What was his title to praise and renown?
What, but the worth of the lessons he taught us,
Discipline, arms, and equipment of war?

Bac.—Yes, but Pantacles was never the wiser;
For in the procession he ought to have led,
When his helmet was tied, he kept puzzling, and tried
To fasten the crest on the crown of his head.
Æs.—But other brave warriors and noble commanders
Were train'd in his lessons to valour and skill;
Such was the noble heroical Lamachus;
Others besides were instructed by him;
And I, from his fragments ordaining a banquet,
Furnish'd and deck'd with majestical phrase,
Brought forward the models of ancient achievement,
Teucer, Patroclus, and chiefs of antiquity;
Raising and rousing Athenian hearts,
When the signal of onset was blown in their ear,
With a similar ardour to dare and to do;
But I never allow'd of your lewd Sthenobœas,
Or filthy, detestable Phædras—not I—
Indeed, I should doubt if my drama throughout
Exhibit an instance of woman in love.
Eur.—No, you were too stern for an amorous turn,
For Venus and Cupid too stern and too stupid.
Æs.—May they leave me at rest, and with peace in my breast,
And infest and pursue your kindred and you,
With the very same blow that despatch'd you below.
Bac.—That was well enough said; with the life that he led,
He himself in the end got a wound from a friend.
Eur.—But what, after all, is the horrible mischief?
My poor Sthenobœas, what harm have they done?
Æs.—The example is followed, the practice has gain'd,
And women of family, fortune, and worth,
Bewilder'd with shame in a passionate fury,
Have poison'd themselves for Bellerophon's sake,
Eur.—But at least you'll allow that I never invented it,
Phædra's affair was a matter of fact.
Æs.—A fact, with a vengeance! but horrible facts
Should be buried in silence, not bruited abroad,
Nor brought forth on the stage, nor emblazon'd in poetry,
Children and boys have a teacher assign'd them—
The bard is a master for manhood and youth,
Bound to instruct them in virtue and truth,
Beholden and bound.
Eur.— But is virtue a sound?
Can any mysterious virtue be found
In bombastical, huge, hyperbolical phrase?
Æs.—Thou dirty, calamitous wretch, recollect

That exalted ideas of fancy require
To be clothed in a suitable vesture of phrase;
And that heroes and gods may be fairly supposed
Discoursing in words of a mightier import,
More lofty by far than the children of man;
As the pomp of apparel assign'd to their persons,
Produced on the stage and presented to view,
Surpasses in dignity, splendour, and lustre
Our popular garb and domestic attire,
A practice which nature and reason allow,
But which you disannull'd and rejected.

Eur.— As how?

Æs.—When you brought forth your kings, in a villainous fashion,
In patches and rage, as a claim for compassion.

Eur.—And this is a grave misdemeanour, forsooth!

Æs.—It has taught an example of sordid untruth;
For the rich of the city, that ought to equip,
And to serve with, a ship, are appealing to pity,
Pretending distress—with an overworn dress.

Bac.—By Jove, so they do; with a waistcoat brand new,
Worn closely within, warm and new for the skin;
And if they escape in this beggarly shape,
You'll meet 'em at market, I warrant 'em all,
Buying the best at the fishmonger's stall.

Æs.—He has taught every soul to sophisticate truth;
And debauch'd all the bodies and minds of the youth;
Leaving them morbid, and pallid, and spare;
And the places of exercise vacant and bare:—
The disorder has spread to the fleet and the crew;
The service is ruin'd, and ruin'd by you—
With prate and debate in a mutinous state;
Whereas, in my day, 'twas a different way;
Nothing they said, nor knew nothing to say,
But to call for their porridge, and cry, "Pull away."

Bac.—Yes—yes, they knew this,
How to f . . . in the teeth
Of the rower beneath;
And befoul their own comrades,
And pillage ashore;
But now they forget the command of the oar:—
Prating and splashing,
Discussing and dashing,
They steer here and there,
With their eyes in the air,
Hither and thither,

Nobody knows whither.

Æs.—Can the reprobate mark in the course he has run,
One crime unattempted, a mischief undone?
With his horrible passions, of sisters and brothers,
And sons-in-law, tempted by villainous mothers,
And temples defiled with a bastardly birth,
And women, divested of honour or worth,
That talk about life "as a death upon earth;"
And sophistical frauds and rhetorical bawds;
Till now the whole state is infested with tribes
Of scriveners and scribblers, and rascally scribes—
All practice of masculine vigour and pride,
Our wrestling and running, are all laid aside,
And we see that the city can hardly provide
For the Feast of the Founder, a racer of force
To carry the torch and accomplish a course.

Bac.—Well, I laugh'd till I cried
The last festival tide,
At the fellow that ran,—
'Twas a heavy fat man,
And he panted and hobbled,
And stumbled and wabbled,
And the pottery people about the gate,
Seeing him hurried, and tired, and late,
Stood to receive him in open rank,
Helping him on with a hearty spank
Over the shoulder and over the flank,
The flank, the loin, the back, the shoulders,
With shouts of applause from all beholders;
While he ran on with a filthy fright,
Puffing his link to keep it alight.

CHORUS

Ere the prize is lost and won
Mighty doings will be done.
Now then—(though to judge aright
Is difficult, when force and might
Are opposed with ready slight,
When the Champion that is cast
Tumbles uppermost at last)
—Since you meet in equal match,
Argue, contradict and scratch,
Scuffle, and abuse and bite,
Tear and fight,
With all your wits and all your might.

—Fear not for a want of sense
Or judgment in your audience,
That defect has been removed;
They're prodigiously improved,
Disciplined, alert and smart,
Drill'd and exercised in art:
Each has got a little book,
In the which they read and look,
Doing all their best endeavour
To be critical and clever;
Thus their own ingenious natures,
Aided and improved by learning,
Will provide you with spectators
Shrewd, attentive, and discerning.

Terrestrial Hermes with supreme espial,
Inspector of that old paternal realm,
Aid and assist me now, you suppliant,
Revisiting and returning to my country!

It is not justly express'd, since he return'd
Clandestinely without authority.

Bac.—That's well remark'd; but I don't comprehend it.

Eur.—(tauntingly and coolly).
Proceed—Continue!

Bac.—(jealous of his authority). Yes, you must continue,
Æschylus, I command you to continue.
(To Euripides.)
And you, keep a look-out and mark his blunders.

Æs.—"From his sepulchral mound I call my father
"To listen and hear"—

Eur.— There's a tautology!
"To listen and hear"—

Bac.— Why, don't you see, you ruffian!
It's a dead man he's calling to—Three times
We call to 'em, but they can't be made to hear.

Æs.—And you: your prologues, of what kind were they?

Eur.—I'll show ye; and if you'll point out a tautology,
Or a single word clapt in to botch a verse—
That's all!—I'll give you leave to spit upon me.

Bac.—(with an absurd air of patience and resignation).
Well, I can't help myself; I'm bound to attend.
Begin then with these same fine-spoken prologues.

Eur.—"Œdipus was at first a happy man." . . .

Æs.—Not he, by Jove!—but born to misery;
Predicted and predestined by an oracle

Before his birth to murder his own father!
—Could he have been "at first a happy man?"
Eur. . . . "But afterwards became a wretched mortal."
Æs.—By no means! he continued to be wretched,
—Born wretched, and exposed as soon as born
Upon a potsherd in a winter's night;
Brought up a foundling with disabled feet;
Then married—a young man to an aged woman,
That proved to be his mother—whereupon
He tore his eyes out.
Bac. — To complete his happiness.
He ought to have served at sea with Erasinides.
There!—that's enough—now come to music, can't ye?
Eur.—I mean it; I shall now proceed to expose him
As a bad composer, awkward, uninventive,
Repeating the same strain perpetually.—

CHORUS

I stand in wonder and perplext
To think of what will follow next.
Will he dare to criticise
The noble bard, that did devise
Our oldest, boldest harmonies,
Whose mighty music we revere?
Much I marvel, much I fear.—

Eur.—Mighty fine music, truly! I'll give ye a sample;
It's every inch cut out to the same pattern.
Bac.—I'll mark—I've pick'd these pebbles up for counters.
Eur.—Noble Achilles! Forth to the rescue!
Forth to the rescue with ready support!
Hasten and go,
There is havoc and woe,
Hasty defeat,
And a bloody retreat,
Confusion and rout,
And the terrible shout
Of a conquering foe,
Tribulation and woe!
Bac.—Whoh hoh there! we've had woes enough, I reckon;
Therefore I'll go to wash away my woe
In a warm bath.
Eur.— No, do pray wait an instant,
And let me give you first another strain,
Transferr'd to the stage from music to the lyre.
Bac.—Proceed then—only give us no more woes.

Eur.—The supremacy sceptre and haughty command
Of the Grecian land—with a flatto-flatto-flatto-thrat—
And the ravenous sphinx, with her horrible brood,
Thirsting for blood—with a flatto-flatto-flatto-thrat,
And armies equipt for a vengeful assault,
For Paris's fault—with a flatto-flatto-flatto-thrat.
Bac.—What herb is that same flatto-thrat? some simple,
I guess, you met with in the field of Marathon:
—But such a tune as this! you must have learnt it
From fellows hauling buckets at the well.
Æs.—Such were the strains I purified and brought
To just perfection—taught by Phrynichus,
Not copying him, but culling other flowers
From those fair meadows which the Muses love—
—But he filches and begs, adapts and borrows
Snatches of tunes from minstrels in the street,
Strumpets and vagabonds—the lullabys
Of nurses and old women—jigs and ballads—
I'll give ye a proof—Bring me a lyre here, somebody.
What signifies a lyre? the castanets
Will suit him better—Bring the castanets,
With Euripides's Muse to snap her fingers
In cadence to her master's compositions.
Bac.—This Muse, I take it, is a Lesbian Muse.
Æs.—Gentle halcyons, ye that lave
Your snowy plume,
Sporting on the summer wave;
Ye too that around the room,
On the rafters of the roof
Strain aloft your airy woof;
Ye spiders, spiders ever spinning,
Never ending, still beginning—
Where the dolphin loves to follow,
Weltering in the surge's hollow,
Dear to Neptune and Apollo;
By the seamen understood
Ominous of harm or good;
In capricious, eager sallies,
Chasing, racing round the galleys.
Æs.—Well now. Do you see this?
Bac.—I see it—

After which Æschylus turns to his antagonist.

Such is your music. I shall now proceed
To give a specimen of your monodies—

O dreary shades of night!
What phantoms of affright
Have scared my troubled sense
With saucer eyes immense;
And huge horrific paws
With bloody claws!
Ye maidens haste, and bring
From the fair spring
A bucket of fresh water; whose clear stream
May purify me from this dreadful dream:
But oh! my dream is out!
Ye maidens search about!
O mighty powers of mercy, can it be;
That Glyke, Glyke, she
(My friend and civil neighbour heretofore),
Has robb'd my henroost of its feather'd store?
With the dawn I was beginning,
Spinning, spinning, spinning, spinning,
Unconscious of the meditated crime;
Meaning to sell by yarn at market-time.
Now tears alone are left me,
My neighbour hath bereft me,
Of all—of all—of all—all but a tear!
Since he, my faithful trusty chanticleer
Is flown—is flown!—Is gone—is gone!
—But, O ye nymphs of sacred Ida, bring
Torches and bows, with arrows on the string;
And search around
All the suspected ground:
And thou, fair huntress of the sky;
Deign to attend, descending from on high—
—While Hecate, with her tremendous torch,
Even from the topmost garret to the porch
Explores the premises with search exact,
To find the thief and ascertain the fact—

Bac.—Come, no more songs!

Æs.— I've had enough of 'em;
For my part, I shall bring him to the balance,
As a true test of our poetic merit,
To prove the weight of our respective verses.

Bac.—Well then, so be it—if it must be so,
That I'm to stand here like a cheesemonger
Retailing poetry with a pair of scales.

(A huge pair of scales are here discovered on the stage.

CHORUS

Curious eager wits pursue
Strange devices quaint and new,
Like the scene you witness here,
Unaccountable and queer;
I myself, if merely told it,
If I did not here behold it,
Should have deem'd it utter folly,
Craziness and nonsense wholly.

Bac.—Move up; stand close to the balance!
Eur.— Here are we—
Bac.—Take hold now, and each of you repeat a verse,
And don't leave go before I call to you!
Eur.—We're ready.
Bac.— Now, then, each repeat a verse,
Eur.—"I wish that Argo with her woven wings."
Æs.—"O streams of Sperchius, and ye pastured plains."
Bac.—Let go!—See now—this scale outweighs that other
Very considerably—
Eur.— How did it happen?
Bac.—He slipp'd a river in, like the wool-jobbers,
To moisten his metre—but your line was light,
A thing with wings—ready to fly away.
Eur.—Let him try once again then, and take hold.
Bac.—Take hold once more.
Eur.— We're ready.
Bac.— Now repeat.
Eur.—"Speech is the temple and altar of persuasion."
Æs.—"Death is a God that loves no sacrifice."
Bac.—Let go!—See there again! This scale sinks down;
No wonder that it should, with Death put into it,
The heaviest of all calamities.
Eur.—But I put in persuasion finely express'd
In the best terms.
Bac.— Perhaps so; but persuasion
Is soft and light and silly—Think of something
That's heavy and huge, to outweigh him, something solid.
Eur.—Let's see—Where have I got it? Something solid?
Bac.—"Achilles has thrown twice—Twice a deuce ace!"
Come now, one trial more; this is the last.
Eur.—"He grasp'd a mighty mace of massy weight."
Æs.—"Cars upon cars, and corpses heap'd pell mell."
Bac.—He has nick'd you again—
Eur.— Why so? What has he done?

Bac.—He has heap'd ye up cars and corpses, such a load
As twenty Egyptian labourers could not carry—
Æs.—Come, no more single lines—let him bring all,
His wife, his children, his Cephisophon,
His books and everything, himself to boot—
I'll counterpoise them with a couple of lines.
Bac.—Well, they're both friends of mine—I shan't decide
To get myself ill-will from either party;
One of them seems extraordinary clever,
And the other suits my taste particularly.
Pluto.—Won't you decide then, and conclude the business?
Bac.—Suppose then I decide; what then?
Pluto.— Then take him
Away with you, whichever you prefer,
As a present for your pains in coming down here.
Bac.—Heaven bless ye—Well—let's see now—Can't ye advise me?
This is the case—I'm come in search of a poet—
Pluto.—With what design?
Bac.— With this design; to see
The City again restored to peace and wealth,
Exhibiting tragedies in a proper style.
—Therefore whichever gives the best advice
On public matters I shall take him with me.
—First then of Alcibiades, what think ye?
The City is in hard labour with the question.
Eur.—What are her sentiments towards him?
Bac.— What?
"She loves and she detests and longs to have him."
But tell me, both of you, your own opinions.
Eur.—(Euripides and Æschylus speak each in his own tragical style). I hate the man, that in his country's service
Is slow, but ready and quick to work her harm;
Unserviceable except to serve himself.
Bac.—Well said, by Jove!—Now you—Give us a sentence.
Æs.—'Tis rash and idle policy to foster
A lion's whelp within the city walls,
But when he's rear'd and grown you must indulge him.
Bac.—By Jove then I'm quite puzzled; one of them
Has answer'd clearly, and the other sensibly:
But give us both of ye one more opinion;
—What means are left of safety for the state?
Eur.—To tack Cinesias like a pair of wings
To Cleocritus' shoulders, and dispatch them
From a precipice to sail across the seas.
Bac.—It seems a joke; but there's some sense in it.

Eur. . . . Then being both equipp'd with little cruets
They might co-operate in a naval action,
By sprinkling vinegar in the enemies' eyes.
—But I can tell you and will.
Bac.— Speak, and explain then—
Eur.—If we mistrust where present trust is placed,
Trusting in what was heretofore mistrusted—
Bac.—How! What? I'm at a loss—Speak it again
Not quite so learnedly—more plainly and simply.
Eur.—If we withdrew the confidence we placed
In these our present statesmen, and transfer it
To those whom we mistrusted heretofore,
This seems I think our fairest chance for safety:
If with our present counsellors we fair,
Then with their opposites we might succeed.
Bac.—That's capitally said, my Palamedes!
My politician! was it all your own?
Your own invention?
Eur.— All except the cruets;
That was a notion of Cephisophon's.
Bac. (to Æschylus.)—Now you—what say you?
Æs.— Inform me about the city—
What kind of persons has she placed in office?
Does she promote the worthiest?
Bac.— No, not she,
She can't abide 'em.
Æs.— Rogues then she prefers?
Bac.—Not altogether, she makes use of 'em
Perforce as it were.
Æs.— Then who can hope to save
A state so wayward and perverse, that finds
No sort of habit fitted for her wear?
Drugget or superfine, nothing will suit her!
Bac.—Do think a little how she can be saved.
Æs.—Not here; when I return there, I shall speak.
Bac—No, do pray send some good advice before you.
Æs.—When they regard their lands as enemy's ground,
Their enemy's possessions as their own,
Their seamen and the fleet their only safeguard,
Their sole resource hardship and poverty,
And resolute endurance in distress—
Bac—That's well,—but juries eat up everything,
And we shall lose our supper if we stay.
Pluto.—Decide then—
Bac.— You'll decide for your own selves,

I'll make a choice according to my fancy.
Eur.—Remember, then, your oath to your poor friend;
And, as you swore and promised, rescue me.
Bac.—"It was my tongue that swore"—I fix on Æschylus.
Eur—O wretch! what have you done?
Bac.— Me? done? What should I?
Voted for Æschylus to be sure—Why not?
Eur.—And after such a villainous act, you dare
To view me face to face—Art not ashamed?
Bac.—Why shame, in point of fact, is nothing real:
Shame is the apprehension of a vision
Reflected from the surface of opinion—
—The opinion of the public—they must judge.
Eur.—O cruel!—Will you abandon me to death?
Bac.—Why perhaps death is life, and life is death,
And victuals and drink an illusion of the senses;
For what is Death but an eternal sleep?
And does not Life consist in sleeping and eating?
Pluto.—Now, Bacchus, you'll come here with us within.
Bac. (a little startled and alarmed).—What for?
Pluto.— To be received and entertain'd
With a feast before you go.
Bac.— That's well imagined,
With all my heart—I've not the least objection.

CHORUS

Happy is the man possessing
The superior holy blessing
Of a judgment and a taste
Accurate, refined and chaste;
As it plainly doth appear
In the scene presented here;
Where the noble worthy Bard
Meets with a deserved reward,
Suffer'd to depart in peace
Freely with a full release,
To revisit once again
His kindred and his countrymen—
Hence moreover
You discover,
That to sit with Socrates,
In a dream of learned ease;
Quibbling, counter-quibbling, prating,
Argufying and debating
With the metaphysic sect,

Daily sinking in neglect,
Growing careless, incorrect,
While the practice and the rules
Of the true poetic Schools
Are renounced or slighted wholly,
Is a madness and a folly.

PLUTO

Go forth with good wishes and hearty good-will,
And salute the good people on Pallas's hill;
Let them hear and admire father Æschylus still
In his office of old which again he must fill:
—You must guide and direct them,
Instruct and correct them,
With a lesson in verse,
For you'll find them much worse;
Greater fools than before, and their folly much more,
And more numerous far than the blockheads of yore—
—And give Cleophon this,
And bid him not miss,
But be sure to attend
To the summons I send:
To Nicomachus too,
And the rest of the crew
That devise and invent
New taxes and tribute,
Are summonses sent,
Which you'll mind to distribute.
Bid them come to their graves,
Or, like runaway slaves,
If they linger and fail,
We shall drag them to jail;
Down here in the dark
With a brand and a mark.

ÆS.—I shall do as you say;
But the while I'm away,
Let the seat that I held
Be by Sophocles fill'd,
As deservedly reckon'd
My pupil and second
In learning and merit
And tragical spirit—
And take special care;
Keep that reprobate there
Far aloof from the Chair;

Let him never sit in it
An hour or a minute,
By chance or design
To profane what was mine.

Pluto.—Bring forward the torches!—The Chorus shall wait
And attend on the Poet in triumph and state
With a thundering chaunt of majestical tone
To wish him farewell, with a tune of his own.

(Hexameters)

Chorus

Now may the powers of the earth give a safe and speedy departure
To the Bard at his second birth, with a prosperous happy revival;
And may the city, fatigued with wars and long revolution,
At length be brought to return to just and wise resolutions;
Long in peace to remain—Let restless Cleophon hasten
Far from amongst us here—since wars are his only diversion,
Thrace his native land will afford him wars in abundance.

THE TRAGICAL HISTORY OF DR. FAUSTUS

THE TRAGICAL HISTORY OF DR. FAUSTUS

(Christopher Marlowe, English dramatist, was born in 1564. He received degrees of B.A. and M.A. at Cambridge. He is the first great English dramatist, and has been described as 'the matrix from which Shakespeare's plays evolved.' His best known plays were "Tamburlaine the Great," 1590; "Dr. Faustus," 1604, which was greatly admired by and had no little influence on Goethe. "The Jew of Malta," and Edward II" are others. The latter is a play worthy of the rank with the best of Shakespeare's historical plays. Marlowe, outside his writings, was possibly an actor, and possibly a soldier. He led a life of irregularity and was killed in a brawl, 1593).

FROM THE QUARTO OF 1604

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

The Pope.
Cardinal of Lorrain.
The Emperor of Germany.
Duke of Vanholt.
Faustus.
Valdes, } friends to Faustus.
Cornelius, }
Wagner, servant to Faustus.
Clown.
Robin.
Ralph.
Vintner.
Horse-courser.
A Knight.
An Old Man.
Scholars, Friars, and Attendants.
Duchess of Vanholt.
Lucifer.
Belzebub.
Mephistophilis.
Good Angel.
Evil Angel.
The Seven Deadly Sins.
Devils.
Spirits in the shapes of Alexander the Great, of his Paramour and of Helen.
Chorus.

Enter Chorus

Chorus.—Not marching now in fields of Thrasymene,
Where Mars did mate the Carthaginians;
Nor sporting in the dalliance of love,
In courts of kings where state is overturn'd;

Nor in the pomp of proud audacious deeds,
Intends our Muse to vaunt her heavenly verse:
Only this, gentlemen,—we must perform
The form of Faustus' fortunes, good or bad:
To patient judgments we appeal our plaud,
And speak for Faustus in his infancy.
Now is he born, his parents base of stock,
In Germany, within a town call'd Rhodes:
Of riper years, to Wertenberg he went,
Whereas his kinsmen chiefly brought him up.
So soon he profits in divinity,
The fruitful plot of scholarism grac'd,
That shortly he was grac'd with doctor's name,
Excelling all whose sweet delight disputes
In heavenly matters of theology;
Till swoln with cunning, of a self-conceit,
His waxen wings did mount above his reach,
And, melting, heavens conspir'd his overthrow;
For, falling to a devilish exercise,
And glutted now with learning's golden gifts,
He surfeits upon cursed necromancy;
Nothing so sweet as magic is to him,
Which he prefers before his chiefest bliss:
And this the man that in his study sits. (Exit

FAUSTUS *discovered in his study*

Faust.—Settle thy studies, Faustus, and begin
To sound the depth of that thou wilt profess:
Having commenc'd, be a divine in show,
Yet level at the end of every art,
And live and die in Aristotle's works.
Sweet Analytics, 'tis thou hast ravish'd me!
Bene disserere est finis logices.
Is, to dispute well, logic's chiefest end?
Affords this art no greater miracle?
Then read no more; thou hast attain'd that end:
A greater subject fitteth Faustus' wit:
Bid Economy farewell, and Galen come,
Seeing, *Ubi desinit philosophus, ibi incipit medicus*:
Be a physician, Faustus; heap up gold,
And be eternis'd for some wondrous cure:
Summum bonum medicinæ sanitas,
The end of physic is our body's health.
Why Faustus, hast thou not attain'd that end?

Is not thy common talk found aphorisms?
Are not thy bills hung up as monuments,
Whereby whole cities have escap'd the plague,
And thousand desperate maladies been eas'd?
Yet art thou still but Faustus, and a man.
Couldst thou make men to live eternally,
Or, being dead, raise them to life again,
Then this profession were to be esteem'd.
Physic, farewell! Where is Justinian? (Reads.
Si una eademque res legatur duobus, alter rem, alter valorem, rei, etc.
A pretty case of paltry legacies! (Reads.
Exhæditare filium non potest pater, nisi, etc.
Such is the subject of the institute,
And universal body of the law:
This study fits a mercenary drudge,
Who aims at nothing but external trash;
Too servile and illiberal for me.
When all is done, divinity is best:
Jerome's Bible, Faustus; view it well. (Reads.
Stipendium peccati mors est. Ha! *Stipendium,* etc.
The reward of sin is death: that's hard. (Reads.
Si una eademque res legatur duobus, alter rem, alter valorem,
If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and there's no truth in us. Why, then, belike we must sin, and so consequently die:
'Ay, we must die an everlasting death.
What doctrine call you this, *Che sera, sera,*
What will be, shall be? Divinity, adieu!
These metaphysics of magicians.
And necromantic books are heavenly;
Lines, circles, scenes, letters, and characters;
Ay, these are those that Faustus most desires.
O, what a world of profit and delight,
Of power, of honour, of omnipotence,
Is promis'd to the studious artisan!
All things that move between the quiet poles
Shall be at my command: emperors and kings
Are but obeyed in their several provinces,
Nor can they raise the wind, or rend the clouds;
But his dominion that exceeds in this,
Stretcheth as far as doth the mind of man;
A sound magician is a mighty god:
Here, Faustus, tire thy brains to gain a deity.

Enter WAGNER

Wagner, commend me to my dearest friends
The German Valdes and Cornelius;
Request them earnestly to visit me.

Wag.—I will, sir. (Exit.

Faust.—Their conference will be a greater help to me
Than all my labours, plod I ne'er so fast.

Enter Good Angel *and* Evil Angel

G. Ang.—O, Faustus, lay thy damned book aside,
And gaze not on it, lest it tempt thy soul,
And heap God's heavy wrath upon thy head!
Read, read the Scriptures:—that is blasphemy.

E. Ang.—Go forward, Faustus, in that famous art
Wherein all Nature's treasure is contain'd:
Be thou on earth as Jove is in the sky,
Lord and commander of these elements.

(Exeunt Angels.

Faust.—How am I glutted with conceit of this!
Shall I make spirits fetch me what I please,
Resolve me of all ambiguities,
Perform what desperate enterprise I will?
I'll have them fly to India for gold,
Ransack the ocean for orient pearl,
And search all corners of the new-found world
For pleasant fruits and princely delicates;
I'll have them read me strange philosophy,
And tell the secrets of all foreign kings;
I'll have them wall all Germany with brass,
And make swift Rhine circle fair Wertenberg;
I'll have them fill the public schools with silk,
Wherewith the students shall be bravely clad;
I'll levy soldiers with the coin they bring,
And chase the Prince of Parma from our land,
And reign sole king of all the provinces;
Yea, stranger engines for the brunt of war,
Than was the fiery keel at Antwerp's bridge,
I'll make my servile spirits to invent.

Enter VALDES *and* CORNELIUS

Come, German Valdes and Cornelius,
And make me blest with your sage conference.
Valdes, sweet Valdes, and Cornelius,

Know that your words have won me at the last
To practise magic and concealed arts:
Yet not your words only, but mine own fantasy,
That will receive no object; for my head
But ruminates on necromantic skill.
Philosophy is odious and obscure;
Both law and physic are for petty wits;
Divinity is basest of the three,
Unpleasant, harsh, contemptible, and vile:
'Tis magic, magic, that hath ravish'd me.
Then, gentle friends, aid me in this attempt;
And I, that have with concise syllogisms
Gravell'd the pastors of the German church,
And made the flowering pride of Wertenberg
Swarm to my problems, as the infernal spirits
On sweet Musæus when he came to hell,
Will be as cunning as Agrippa was,
Whose shadow made all Europe honour him.

Vald.—Faustus, these books, thy wit, and our experience,
Shall make all nations to canonise us.
As Indian Moors obey their Spanish lords,
So shall the spirits of every element
Be always serviceable to us three;
Like lions shall they guard us when we please;
Like Almain rutters with their horsemen's staves.
Or Lapland giants, trotting by our sides;
Sometimes like women, or unwedded maids,
Shadowing more beauty in their airy brows
Than have the white breasts of the queen of love:
From Venice shall they drag huge argosies,
And from America the golden fleece
That yearly stuffs old Philip's treasury;
If learned Faustus will be resolute.

Faust.—Valdes, as resolute am I in this
As thou to live: therefore object it not.

Corn.—The miracles that magic will perform
Will make thee vow to study nothing else.
He that is grounded in astrology,
Enrich'd with tongues, well seen in minerals,
Hath all the principles magic doth require:
Then doubt not, Faustus, but to be renown'd,
And more frequented for this mystery
Than heretofore the Delphian oracle.
The spirits tell me they can dry the sea,
And fetch the treasure of all foreign wrecks,

Ay, all the wealth that our forefathers hid
Within the massy entrails of the earth:
Then tell me, Faustus, what shall we three want?

Faust.—Nothing, Cornelius. O, this cheers my soul!
Come, show me some demonstrations magical,
That I may conjure in some lusty grove,
And have these joys in full possession.

Vald.—Then haste thee to some solitary grove,
And bear wise Bacon's and Albertus' works,
The Hebrew Psalter, and New Testament;
And whatsoever else is requisite
We will inform thee ere our conference cease.

Corn.—Valdes, first let him know the words of art;
And then, all other ceremonies learn'd,
Faustus may try his cunning by himself.

Vald.—First I'll instruct thee in the rudiments,
And then wilt thou be perfecter than I.

Faust.—Then come and dine with me, and, after meat,
We'll canvass every quiddity thereof;
For, ere I sleep, I'll try what I can do:
This night I'll conjure, though I die therefore.

(Exeunt.

Enter two Scholars

First Schol.—I wonder what's become of Faustus, that was wont to make our schools ring with *sic probo*.

Sec. Schol.—That shall we know, for see, here comes his boy.

Enter Wagner

First Schol.—How now, sirrah! where's thy master?

Wag.—God in heaven knows.

Sec. Schol.—Why, dost not thou know?

Wag.—Yes, I know; but that follows not.

First Schol.—Go to, sirrah! leave your jesting, and tell us where he is.

Wag.—That follows not necessary by force of argument, that you, being licentiates, should stand upon: therefore acknowledge your error, and be attentive.

Sec. Schol.—Why, didst thou not say thou knewest?

Wag.—Have you any witness on't?

First Schol.—Yes, sirrah, I heard you.

Wag.—Ask my fellow if I be a thief.

Sec. Schol.—Well, you will not tell us?

Wag.—Yes, sir, I will tell you; yet, if you were not dunces, you would never ask me such a question, for is not he

corpus naturale? and is not that *mobile?* then wherefore should you ask me such a question? But that I am by nature phlegmatic, slow to wrath, and prone to lechery (to love, I would say), it were not for you to come within forty foot of the place of execution, although I do not doubt to see you both hanged the next sessions. Thus having triumphed over you, I will set my countenance like a precisian, and begin to speak thus:—Truly, my dear brethren, my master is within at dinner, with Valdes and Cornelius, as this wine, if it could speak, would inform your worships: and so, the Lord bless you, preserve you, and keep you, my dear brethren, my dear brethren!

First Schol.—Nay, then, I fear he has fallen into that damned art for which they two are infamous through the world.

Sec. Schol.—Were he a stranger, and not allied to me, yet should I grieve for him. But, come, let us go and inform the Rector, and see if he by his grave counsel can reclaim him.

First Schol.—O, but I fear me nothing can reclaim him!

Sec. Schol.—Yet let us try what we can do. (Exeunt.

Enter FAUSTUS *to conjure.*

Faust.—Now that the gloomy shadow of the earth,
Longing to view Orion's drizzling look,
Leaps from th' antarctic world unto the sky,
And dims the welkin with her pitchy breath,
Faustus, begin thine incantations,
And try if devils will obey thy hest,
Seeing thou hast pray'd and sacrific'd to them.
Within this circle is Jehovah's name,
Forward and backward anagrammatis'd,
Th' abbreviated names of holy saints,
Figures of every adjunct to the heavens,
And characters of signs and erring stars,
By which the spirits are enforc'd to rise:
Then fear not, Faustus, but be resolute,
And try the uttermost magic can perform.—

Sint mihi dei Acherontis propitii! Valeat numen triplex Jehovæ Ignei aërii, aquatani spiritus, salveti! Orientis princeps Belzebub, inferni ardentis monarcha, et Demogorgon, propitiamus vos, ut appareat et surgat Mephistophilis, quod tumeraris: per Jehovam, Gehennam, et consecration aquam quam nunc spargo, signumque crucis quod nunc facis, et per vota nostra, ipse nunc surgat nobis dicatus Mephistophilis!

Enter MEPHISTOPHILIS

I charge thee to return, and change thy shape;
Thou art too ugly to attend on me:
Go, and return an old Franciscan friar;
That holy shape becomes a devil best.

(Exit Mephistophilis

I see there's virtue in my heavenly words:
Who would not be proficient in this art?
How pliant is this Mephistophilis,
Full of obedience and humility!
Such is the force of magic and my spells:
No, Faustus, thou art conjuror laureat,
That canst command great Mephistophilis:
Quin regis Mephistophilis fratris imagine.

Re-enter MEPHISTOPHILIS *like a Franciscan friar*

Meph.—Now, Faustus, what wouldst thou have me do?
Faust.—I charge thee wait upon me whilst I live,
To do whatever Faustus shall command,
Be it to make the moon drop from her sphere,
Or the ocean to overwhelm the world.
Meph.—I am a servant to great Lucifer,
And may not follow thee without his leave:
No more than he commands must we perform.
Faust.—Did not he charge thee to appear to me?
Meph.—No, I came hither of mine own accord.
Faust.—Did not my conjuring speeches raise thee? speak.
Meph.—That was the cause, but yet *per accidens;*
For, when we hear one rack the name of God,
Abjure the Scriptures and his Saviour Christ,
We fly, in hope, to get his glorious soul;
Nor will we come, unless he use such means
Whereby he is in danger to be damn'd.
Therefore the shortest cut for conjuring
Is stoutly to abjure the Trinity,
And pray devoutly to the prince of hell.
Faust.—So Faustus hath
Already done; and holds this principle,
There is no chief but only Belzebub;
To whom Faustus doth dedicate himself.
This word "damnation" terrifies not him,
For he confounds hell in Elysium:
His ghost be with the old philosophers!
But, leaving these vain trifles of men's souls,

Tell me what is that Lucifer thy lord?
Meph.—Arch-regent and commander of all spirits.
Faust.—Was not that Lucifer an angel once?
Meph.—Yes, Faustus, and most dearly lov'd of God.
Faust.—How comes it, then, that he is prince of devils?
Meph.—O, by aspiring pride and insolence;
For which God threw him from the face of heaven.
Faust.—And what are you that live with Lucifer?
Meph.—Unhappy spirits that fell with Lucifer?
Conspir'd against our God with Lucifer,
And are for ever damn'd with Lucifer.
Faust.—Where are you damn'd?
Meph.—In hell.
Faust.—How comes it, then, that thou art out of hell?
Meph.—Why, this is hell, nor am I out of it.
Think'st thou that I, who saw the face of God,
And tasted the eternal joys of heaven,
Am not tormented with ten thousand hells,
In being depriv'd of everlasting bliss?
O, Faustus, leave these frivolous demands,
Which strike a terror to my fainting soul!
Faust.—What, is great Mephistophilis so passionate
For being deprived of the joys of heaven?
Learn thou of Faustus manly fortitude,
And scorn those joys thou never shalt possess.
Go bear these tidings to great Lucifer:
Seeing Faustus hath incurr'd eternal death
By desperate thoughts against Jove's deity,
Say, he surrenders up to him his soul,
So he will spare him four-and-twenty years,
Letting him live in all voluptuousness;
Having thee ever to attend on me,
To give me whatsoever I shall ask,
To tell me whatsover I demand,
To slay mine enemies, and aid my friends,
And always be obedient to my will.
Go and return to mighty Lucifer,
And meet me in my study at midnight,
And then resolve me of thy master's mind.
Meph.—I will, Faustus. (Exit.
Faust.—Had I as many souls as there be stars,
I'd give them all for Mephistophilis.
By him I'll be great emperor of the world,
And make a bridge through the moving air,
To pass the ocean with a band of men;

I'll join the hills that bind the Afric shore,
And make that country continent to Spain,
And both contributory to my crown:
The Emperor shall not live but by my leave,
For any potentate of Germany.
Now that I have obtained what I desir'd,
I'll live in speculation of this art,
Till Mephistophilis return again. (Exit.

Enter WAGNER *and* Clown

Wag.—Sirrah boy, come hither.

Clown.—How, boy! swowns, boy! I hope you have seen many boys with such pickadevaunts as I have: boy, quotha!

Wag.—Tell me, sirrah, hast thou any comings in?

Clown.—Ay, and goings out too; you may see else.

Wag.—Alas, poor slave! see how poverty jesteth in his nakedness! the villain is bare and out of service, and so hungry, that I know he would give his soul to the devil for a shoulder of mutton, though it were blood-raw.

Clown.—How! my soul to the devil for a shoulder of mutton, though 'twere blood-raw! not so, good friend: by'r lady, I had need have it well roasted, and good sauce to it, if I pay so dear.

Wag.—Well, wilt thou serve me, and I'll make thee go like *Qui mihi discipulus?*

Clown.—How, inverse?

Wag.—No, sirrah; in beaten silk and staves-acre.

Clown.—How, how, knaves-acre! ay, I thought that was all the land his father left him. Do you hear? I would be sorry to rob you of your living.

Wag.—Sirrah, I say in staves-acre.

Clown.—Oho, oho, staves-acre! why, then, belike, if I were your man, I should be full of vermin.

Wag.—So thou shalt, whether thou beest with me or no. But, sirrah, leave your jesting, and bind yourself presently unto me for seven years, or I'll turn all the lice about thee into familiars, and they shall tear thee in pieces.

Clown.—Do you hear, sir? you may save that labour; they are too familiar with me already: swowns, they are as bold with my flesh as if they had paid for their meat and drink.

Wag.—Well, do your hear, sirrah? hold, take these guiders. (Gives money.

Clown.—Gridirons! what be they?

Wag.—Why, French crowns.

Clown.—Mass, but for the name of French crowns, a man were as good have as many English counters. And what should I do with these?

Wag.—Why, now, sirrah, thou art at an hour's warning, whensoever and wheresoever the devil shall fetch thee.

Clown.—No, no; here, take your gridirons again.

Wag.—Truly, I'll none of them.

Clown.—Truly, but you shall.

Wag.—Bear witness I gave them him.

Clown.—Bear witness I give them you again.

Wag.—Well, I will cause two devils presently to fetch thee away.—Baliol and Belcher!

Clown.—Let your Baliol and your Belcher come here, and I'll knock them, they were never so knocked since they were devils: say I should kill one of them, what would folks say? "Do ye see yonder tall fellow in the round slop? he has killed the devil." So I should be called Kill-devil all the parish over.

Enter two Devils; *and the* Clown *runs up and down crying.*

Wag.—Baliol and Belcher,—spirits, away!

(Exeunt Devils.

Clown.—What, are they gone? a vengeance on them! they have vile long nails. There was a he-devil and a she-devil: I'll tell you how you shall know them; all he-devils has horns, and all she-devils has clifts and cloven feet.

Wag.—Well, sirrah, follow me.

Clown.—But, do you hear? if I should serve you, would you teach me to raise up Banios and Belcheos?

Wag.—I will teach thee to turn thyself to anything, to a dog, or a cat, or a mouse, or a rat, or anything.

Clown.—How! a Christian fellow to a dog, or a cat, a mouse, or a rat! no, no, sir; if you turn me into anything, let it be in the likeness of a pretty frisking flea, that I may be here and there and everywhere: O, I'll tickle the pretty wenches' plackets! I'll be amongst them, i'faith.

Wag.—Well, sirrah, come.

Clown.—But, do you hear, Wagner?

Wag.—How!—Baliol and Belcher!

Clown.—O Lord! I pray, sir, let Banio and Belcher go sleep.

Wag.—Villain, call me Master Wagner, and let thy left eye be diametarily fixed upon my right heel, with *quasi vestigiis nostris insistere.* (Exit.

Clown.—God forgive me, he speaks Dutch fustian.
Well, I'll follow him; I'll serve him, that's flat. (Exit.

FAUSTUS *discovered in his study*

Faust.—Now, Faustus, must.
Thou needs be damn'd, and canst thou not be sav'd:
What boots it, then, to think of God or heaven?
Away with such vain fancies, and despair;
Despair in God, and trust in Belzebub:
Now go not backward; no, Faustus, be resolute:
Why waver'st thou? O, something soundeth in mine ears,
"Abjure this magic, turn to God again!"
Ay, and Faustus will turn to God again.
To God? he loves thee not;
The god thou serv'st is thine own appetite,
Wherein is fix'd the love of Belzebub:
To him I'll build an altar and a church,
And offer lukewarm blood of new-born babes.

Enter Good Angel *and* Evil Angel

G. Ang.—Sweet Faustus, leave that execrable art.
Faust.—Contrition, prayer, repentance—what of them?
G. Ang.—O, they are means to bring thee unto heaven!
E. Ang.—Rather illusions, fruits of lunacy,
That make men foolish that do trust them most.
G. Ang.—Sweet Faustus, think of heaven and heavenly things.
E. Ang.—No, Faustus; think of honour and of wealth.
(Exeunt Angels.

Faust.—Of wealth!
Why, the signiory of Embden shall be mine.
When Mephistophilis shall stand by me,
What god can hurt thee, Faustus? thou art safe:
Cast no more doubts.—Come, Mephistophilis,
And bring glad tidings from great Lucifer;—
Is't not midnight?—come, Mephistophilis,
Veni, veni Mephistophile!

Enter MEPHISTOPHILIS

Now tell me what says Lucifer, thy lord?
Meph.—That I shall wait on Faustus whilst he lives,
So he will buy my service with his soul.
Faust.—Already Faustus hath hazarded that for thee.
Meph.—But, Faustus, thou must bequeath it solemnly,

And write a deed of gift with thine own blood;
For that security craves great Lucifer.
If thou deny it, I will back to hell.

Faust.—Stay, Mephistophilis, and tell me, what good will my soul do thy lord?

Meph.—Enlarge his kingdom.

Faust.—Is that the reason why he tempts us thus?

Meph.—*Solamen miseris socios habuisse doloris.*

Faust.—Why, have you any pain that torture others!

Meph.—As great as have the human souls of men.
But, tell me, Faustus, shall I have thy soul?
And I will be thy slave, and wait on thee,
And give thee more than thou hast wit to ask.

Faust.—Ay, Mephistophilis, I give it thee.

Meph.—Then, Faustus, stab thy arm courageously,
And bind thy soul, that at some certain day
Great Lucifer may claim it as his own;
And then be thou as great as Lucifer.

Faust. (Stabbing his arm).—Lo, Mephistophilis, for love of thee,
I cut mine arm, and with my proper blood
Assure my soul to be great Lucifer's,
Chief lord and regent of perpetual night!
View here the blood that trickles from mine arm,
And let it be propitious for my wish.

Meph.—But, Faustus, thou must
Write it in manner of a deed of gift.

Faust.—Ay, so I will (Writes.) But, Mephistophilis,
My blood congeals, and I can write no more.

Meph.—I'll fetch thee fire to dissolve it straight. (Exit.

Faust.—Why might the staying of my blood portend?
Is it unwilling I should write this bill?
Why streams it not, that I may write afresh?
Faustus gives to thee his soul: ah, there it stay'd!
Why shouldst thou not? is not thy soul thine own?
Then write again, Faustus gives to thee his soul.

Re-enter MEPHISTOPHILIS *with a chafer of coals*

Meph.—Here's fire; come, Faustus, set it on.

Faust.—So, now the blood begins to clear again;
Now will I make an end immediately. (Writes.

Meph.—O, what will not I do to obtain his soul! (Aside.

Faust.—*Consummatum est;* this bill is ended,
And Faustus hath bequeathed his soul to Lucifer.
But what is this inscription on mine arm?
Homo, fuge: whither should I fly?

If unto God, he'll throw me down to hell.
My senses are deceiv'd; here's nothing writ:—
I see it plain; here in this place is writ,
Homo, fuge: yet shall not Faustus fly.

Meph.—I'll fetch him somewhat to delight his mind.
(Aside, and then exit.

Re-enter MEPHISTOPHILIS *with* Devils, *who give crowns and rich apparel to* FAUSTUS, *dance, and then depart*

Faust.—Speak, Mephistophilis, what means this show?

Meph.—Nothing, Faustus, but to delight thy mind withal,
And to show thee what magic can perform.

Faust.—But may I raise up spirits when I please?

Meph.—Ay, Faustus, and do greater things than these.

Faust.—Then there's enough for a thousand souls.
Here, Mephistophilis, receive this scroll,
A deed of gift of body and of soul:
But yet conditionally that thou perform
All articles prescrib'd between us both.

Meph.—Faustus, I swear by hell and Lucifer
To effect all promises between us made!

Faust.—Then hear me read them. (Reads.) On these conditions following. First that Faustus may be a spirit in form and substance. Secondly, that Mephistophilis shall be his servant, and at his command. Thirdly, that Mephistophilis shall do for him, and bring him whatsoever he desires. Fourthly, that he shall be in his chamber or house invisible. Lastly, that he shall appear to the said John Faustus, at all times, in what form or shape soever he please. I, John Faustus, of Wertenberg, Doctor, by these presents, do give both body and soul to Lucifer prince of the east, and his minister Mephistophilis; and furthermore grant unto them, that, twenty-four years being expired, the articles above-written inviolate, full power to fetch or carry the said John Faustus, body and soul, flesh, blood, or goods, into their habitation wheresoever. By me, John Faustus.

Meph.—Speak, Faustus, do you deliver this as your deed?

Faust.—Ay, take it, and the devil give thee good on't!

Meph.—Now, Faustus, ask what thou wilt.

Faust.—First will I question with thee about hell.
Tell me, where is the place that men call hell?

Meph.—Under the heavens.

Faust.—Ay, but whereabout?
Meph.—Within the bowels of these elements,
Where we are tortur'd and remain for ever:
Hell hath no limits, nor is circumscrib'd
In one self place; for where we are is hell,
And where hell is, there must we ever be:
And, to conclude, when all the world dissolves,
And every creature shall be purified,
All places shall be hell that are not heaven.
Faust.—Come, I think hell's a fable.
Meph.—Ay, think so still, till experience change thy mind.
Faust.—Why, think'st thou, then, that Faustus shall be damn'd?
Meph.—Ay, of necessity, for here's the scroll
Wherein thou hast given thy soul to Lucifer.
Faust.—Ay, and body too: but what of that?
Think'st thou that Faustus is so fond to imagine
That, after this life, there is any pain?
Tush, these are trifles and mere old wives' tales.
Meph.—But, Faustus, I am an instance to prove the contrary,
For I am damn'd, and now in hell.
Faust.—How! now in hell!
Nay, an this be hell, I'll willingly be damn'd here:
What! walking, disputing, etc.
But, leaving off this, let me have a wife,
The fairest maid in Germany;
For I am wanton and lascivious,
And cannot live without a wife.
Meph.—How! a wife!
I prithee, Faustus, talk not of a wife.
Faust.—Nay, sweet Mephistophilis, fetch me one, for I will have one.
Meph.—Well, thou wilt have one? Sit there till I come: I'll fetch thee a wife in the devil's name. (Exit.

Re-enter MEPHISTOPHILIS *with a* Devil *drest like a* Woman, *with fireworks*

Meph.—Tell me, Faustus, how dost thou like thy wife?
Faust.—A plague on her for a hot whore!
Meph.—Tut, Faustus,
Marriage is but a ceremonial toy;
If thou lovest me, think no more of it.
I'll cull thee out the fairest courtesans,
And bring them every morning to thy bed:
She whom thine eye shall like, thy heart shall have,

Be she as chaste as was Penelope,
As wise as Saba, or as beautiful
As was bright Lucifer before his fall.
Hold, take this book, peruse it thoroughly:
(Gives book.
The iterating of these lines brings gold;
The framing of this circle on the ground
Brings whirlwinds, tempests, thunder, and lightning;
Pronounce this thrice devoutly to thyself,
And men in armour shall appear to thee,
Ready to execute what thou desir'st.

Faust.—Thanks, Mephistophilis: yet fain would I have a book wherein I might behold all spells and incantations, that I might raise up spirits when I please.

Meph.—Here they are in this book. (Turns to them.

Faust.—Now would I have a book where I might see all characters and planets of the heavens, that I might know their motions and dispositions.

Meph.—Here they are too. (Turns to them.

Faust.—Nay, let me have one book more,—and then I have done,—wherein I might see all plants, herbs, and trees, that grow upon the earth.

Meph.—Here they be.

Faust.—O, thou are deceived.

Meph.—Tut, I warrant thee. (Turns to them.

Faust.—When I behold the heavens, then I repent,
And curse thee, wicked Mephistophilis,
Because thou hast depriv'd me of those joys.

Meph.—Why, Faustus,
Thinkest thou heaven is such a glorious thing?
I tell thee, 'tis not half so fair as thou,
Or any man that breathes on earth.

Faust.—How prov'st thou that?

Meph.—'Twas made for man, therefore is man more excellent.

Faust.—If it were made for man, 'twas made for me:
I will renounce this magic and repent.

Enter Good Angel *and* Evil *Angel*

G. Ang.—Faustus, repent; yet God will pity thee.

E. Ang.—Thou art a spirit; God cannot pity thee.

Faust.—Who buzzeth in mine ears I am a spirit?
Be I a devil, yet God may pity me;
Ay, God will pity me, if I repent.

E. Ang.—Ay, but Faustus never shall repent.
(Exeunt Angels.

Faust.—My heart's so harden'd, I cannot repent:
Scarce can I name salvation, faith, or heaven,
But fearful echoes thunder in mine ears,
'Faustus, thou are damn'd!' then swords, and knives,
Poison, guns, halters, and envenom'd steel
Are laid before me to despatch myself;
And long ere this I should have slain myself,
Had not sweet pleasure conquer'd deep despair.
Have not I made blind Homer sing to me
Of Alexander's love and Œnon's death?
And hath not he, that built the walls of Thebes
With ravishing sound of his melodious harp,
Made music with my Mephistophilis?
Why should I die, then, or basely despair!
I am resolv'd; Faustus shall ne'er repent.—
Come, Mephistophilis, let us dispute again,
And argue of divine astrology.
Tell me, are there many heavens above the moon?
Are all celestial bodies but one globe,
As is the substance of this centric earth?

Meph.—As are the elements, such are the spheres,
Mutually folded in each other's orb,
And, Faustus,
All jointly move upon one axletree,
Whose terminus is term'd the world's wide pole;
Nor are the names of Saturn, Mars, or Jupiter
Feign'd, but are erring stars.

Faust.—But, tell me, have they all one motion, both *situ et tempore?*

Meph.—All jointly move from east to west in twenty-four hours upon the poles of the world; but differ in their motion upon the poles of the zodiac.

Faust.—Tush,
These slender trifles Wagner can decide:
Hath Mephistophilis no greater skill?
Who knows not the double motion of the planets?
The first is finish'd in a natural day;
The second thus; as Saturn in thirty years; Jupiter in twelve; Mars in four; the Sun, Venus and Mercury in a year; the Moon in twenty-eight days. Tush, these are freshmen's suppositions. But, tell me, hath every sphere a dominion or *intelligentia?*

Meph.—Ay.

Faust.—How many heavens or spheres are there?

Meph.—Nine; the seven planets, the firmament, and the empyreal heaven.

Faust.—Well resolve me in this question; why have we not conjunctions, oppositions, aspects, eclipses, all at one time, but in some years we have more, in some less?

Meph.—*Per inæqualem motum respectu totius.*

Faust.—Well, I am answered. Tell me who made the world?

Meph.—I will not.

Faust.—Sweet Mephistophilis, tell me.

Meph.—Move me not, for I will not tell thee.

Faust.—Villain, have I not bound thee to tell me anything?

Meph.—Ay, that is not against our kingdom; but this is. Think thou on hell, Faustus, for thou art damned.

Faust.—Think, Faustus, upon God that made the world.

Meph.—Remember this. (Exit.

Faust.—Ay, go, accursed spirit, to ugly hell!
'Tis thou hast damn'd distressed Faustus' soul
Is't not too late?

Re-enter Good Angel *and* Evil Angel

E. Ang.—Too late.

G. Ang.—Never too late, if Faustus can repent,

E. Ang.—If thou repent, devils shall tear thee in pieces.

G. Ang.—Repent, and they shall never raze thy skin.
(Exeunt Angels.

Faust.—Ah, Christ, my Saviour,
Seek to save distressed Faustus' soul!

Enter Lucifer, Belzebub, *and* Mephistophilis

Luc.—Christ cannot save thy soul, for he is just:
There's none but I have interest in the same.

Faust.—O, who art thou that look'st so terrible?

Luc.—I am Lucifer,
And this is my companion-prince in hell.

Faust.—O, Faustus, they are come to fetch away thy soul!

Luc.—We come to tell thee thou dost injure us;
Thou talk'st of Christ, contrary to thy promise:
Thou shouldst not think of God: think of the devil,
And of his dam too.

Faust.—Nor will I henceforth: pardon me in this,
And Faustus vows never to look to heaven,
Never to name God, or to pray to Him,
To burn his Scriptures, slay his ministers,
And make my spirits pull his churches down.

Luc.—Do so, and we will highly gratify thee.
Faustus, we are come from hell to show thee some pastime: sit down, and thou shalt see all the Seven Deadly Sins appear in their proper shapes.

Faust.—That sight will be as pleasing unto me,
As Paradise was to Adam, the first day
Of his creation.

Luc.—Talk not of Paradise nor creation; but mark this show: talk of the devil, and nothing else.—Come away.

Enter the Seven Deadly Sins

Now, Faustus, examine them of their several names and dispositions.

Faust.—What art thou, the first?

Pride.—I am Pride. I disdain to have any parents. I am like to Ovid's flea; I can creep into every corner of a wench; sometimes like a perriwig, I sit upon her brow; or, like a fan of feathers, I kiss her lips; indeed, I do—whatever do I not? But, fie, what a scent is here! I'll not speak another word, except the ground were perfumed, and covered with cloth of arras.

Faust.—What are thou, the second?

Covet.—I am Covetousness, begotten of an old churl, in an old leathern bag: and, might I have my wish, I would desire that this house and all the people in it were turned to gold, that I might lock up in my good chest: O, my sweet gold!

Faust.—What art thou, the third?

Wrath.—I am Wrath. I had neither father nor mother: I leapt out of a lion's mouth when I was scarce half an hour old; and ever since I have run up and down the world with this case of rapiers, wounding myself when I had nobody to fight withal. I was born in hell; and look to it, for some of you shall be my father.

Faust.—What art thou, the fourth?

Envy.—I am Envy, begotten of a chimney-sweeper and an oyster-wife. I cannot read, and therefore wish all books were burnt. I am lean with seeing others eat. O, that there would come a famine through all the world, that all might die, and I live alone! then thou shouldst see how fat I would be. But must thou sit, and I stand? come down, with a vengeance!

Faust.—Away, envious rascal!—What art thou, the fifth?

Glut.—Who am I, sir? I am Gluttony. My parents are all dead, and the devil a penny they have left me, but a bare pension, and that is thirty meals a day, and ten bevers,—a small trifle to suffice nature. O, I come of a royal parentage! my grandfather was a Gammon of Bacon, my grandmother a Hogshead of Claret-wine; my godfathers were these, Peter Pickle-herring and Mar-

tin Martlemas-beef; O, but my godmother, she was a jolly gentlewoman, and well-beloved in every good town and city; her name was Mistress Margery March-beer. Now, Faustus, thou hast heard all my progeny; wilt thou bid me to supper?

Faust.—No, I'll see thee hanged: thou wilt eat up all my victuals.

Glut.—Then the devil choke thee!

Faust.—Choke thyself, glutton!—What art thou, the sixth?

Sloth.—I am Sloth. I was begotten on a sunny bank, where I have lain ever since; and you have done me great injury to bring me from thence: let me be carried thither again by Gluttony and Lechery. I'll not speak another word for a king's ransom.

Faust.—What are you, Mistress Minx, the seventh and last?

Lechery.—Who I, sir? I am one that loves an inch of raw mutton better than an ell of fried stock-fish; and the first letter of my name begins with L.

Faust.—Away, to hell, to hell! (Exeunt the Sins.

Luc.—Now, Faustus, how dost thou like this?

Faust.—O, this feeds my soul!

Luc.—Tut, Faustus, in hell is all manner of delight.

Faust.—O, might I see hell, and return again,
How happy were I then!

Luc.—Thou shalt; I will send for thee at midnight.
In meantime take this book; peruse it thoroughly,
And thou shalt turn thyself into what shape thou wilt.

Faust.—Great thanks, mighty Lucifer!
This will I keep as chary as my life.

Luc.—Farewell, Faustus, and think on the devil.

Faust.—Farewell, great Lucifer.
(Exeunt Lucifer and Belzebub.
Come, Mephistophilis. (Exeunt.

Enter Chorus

Chor.—Learned Faustus,
To know the secrets of astronomy
Graven in the book of Jove's high firmament,
Did mount himself to scale Olympus' top,
Being seated in a chariot burning bright,
Drawn by the strength of yoky dragons' necks
He now is gone to prove cosmography,
And, as I guess, will first arrive in Rome,
To see the Pope and manner of his court,
And take some part of holy Peter's feast,
That to this day is highly solemnis'd. (Exit.

Enter FAUSTUS *and* MEPHISTOPHILIS

Faust.—Having now, my good Mephistophilis,
Pass'd with delight the stately town of Trier,
Environ'd round with airy mountain-tops,
With walls of flint, and deep-entrenched lakes,
Not to be won by any conquering prince;
From Paris next, coasting the realm of France,
We saw the river Maine fall into Rhine,
Whose banks are set with groves of fruitful vines;
Then up to Naples, rich Campania,
Whose buildings fair and gorgeous to the eye,
The streets straight forth, and pav'd with finest brick,
Quarter the town in four equivalents:
There saw we learned Maro's golden tomb,
The way he cut, an English mile in length,
Thorough a rock of stone, in one night's space;
From thence to Venice, Padua, and the rest,
In one of which a sumptuous temple stands,
That threats the stars with her aspiring top.
Thus hitherto hath Faustus spent his time:
But tell me now what resting-place is this?
Hast thou, as erst I did command,
Conduct me within the walls of Rome?

Meph.—Faustus, I have; and, because we will not be unprovided, I have taken up his Holiness' privy-chamber for our use.

Faust.—I hope his Holiness will bid us welcome.

Meph.—Tut, 'tis no matter, man; we'll be bold with his good cheer.
And now, my Faustus, that thou mayst perceive
What Rome containeth to delight thee with,
Know that this city stands upon seven hills
That underprop the groundwork of the same:
Just through the midst run flowing Tiber's stream
With winding banks that cut it in two parts;
Over the which four stately bridges lean,
That make safe passage to each part of Rome:
Upon the bridge call'd Ponte Angelo
Erected is a castle passing strong,
Within whose walls such store of ordnance are,
And double cannons fram'd of carved brass,
As match the days within one complete year;
Besides the gates, and high pyramides,
Which Julius Cæsar brought from Africa.

Faust.—Now, by the kingdoms of infernal rule,
Of Styx, of Acheron, and the fiery lake
Of ever-burning Phlegethon, I swear
That I do long to see the monuments
And situation of bright-splendent Rome:
Come, therefore, let's away.

Meph.—Nay, Faustus, stay: I know you'd fain see the Pope
And take some part of holy Peter's feast,
Where thou shalt see a troop of bald-pate friars,
Whose *summum bonum* is in belly-cheer.

Faust.—Well, I'm content to compass then some sport,
And by their folly make us merriment.
Then charm me, that I
May be invisible, to do what I please,
Unseen of any whilst I stay in Rome.
(Mephistophilis charms him.

Meph.—So, Faustus; now
Do what thou wilt, thou shalt not be discern'd.

Sound a Sonnet. Enter the Pope *and the* Cardinal of Lorrain *to the banquet, with* Friars *attending*

Pope.—My lord of Lorrain, will't please you draw near?

Faust.—Fall to, and the devil choke you, an you spare!

Pope.—How now! who's that which spake?—Friars, look about.

First Friar.—Here's nobody, if it like your Holiness.

Pope.—My lord, here is a dainty dish was sent me from the Bishop of Milan.

Faust.—I thank you, sir. (Snatches the dish.

Pope.—How now! who's that which snatched the meat from me? will no man look?—My lord, this dish was sent me from the Cardinal of Florence.

Faust.—You say true; I'll ha't. (Snatches the dish.

Pope.—What, again!—My lord, I'll drink to your grace.

Faust.—I'll pledge your grace. (Snatches the cup.

C. of Lor.—My lord, it may be some ghost, newly crept out of Purgatory, come to beg a pardon of your Holiness.

Pope.—It may be so.—Friars, prepare a dirge to lay the fury of this ghost.—Once again, my lord, fall to.
(The Pope crosses himself.

Faust.—What, are you crossing of yourself?
Well, use that trick no more, I would advise you.
(The Pope crosses himself again.
Well, there's the second time. Aware the third;

I give you fair warning.

(The Pope crosses himself again, and Faustus hits him a box of the ear; and they all run away.

Come on, Mephistophilis; what shall we do?

Meph.—Nay, I know not: we shall be cursed with bell, book, and candle.

Faust.—How! bell, book, and candle,—candle, book, and bell,—
Forward and backward, to curse Faustus to hell!
Anon you shall hear a hog grunt, a calf bleat, and an ass bray,
Because it is Saint Peter's holiday.

Re-enter all the Friars *to sing the Dirge*

First Friar.—Come, brethren, let's about our business with good devotion.

They sing

Cursed be he that stole away his Holiness' meat from the table! maledicat Dominus!
Cursed be he that struck his Holiness a blow on the face! maledicat Dominus!
Cursed be he that took Friar Sandelo a blow on the pate! maledicat Dominus!
Cursed be he that disturbeth our holy dirge! maledicat Dominus!
Cursed be he that took away his Holiness' wine! maledicat Dominus!

Et omnes Sancti! Amen!

(Mephistophilis and Faustus beat the Friars, and fling fireworks among them; and so exeunt.

Enter Chorus

Chor.—When Faustus had with pleasure ta'en the view
Of rarest things, and royal courts of kings,
He stay'd his course, and so returned home;
Where such as bear his absence but with grief,
I mean his friends and near'st companions,
Did gratulate his safety with kind words,
And in their conference of what befell,
Touching his journey through the world and air,
They put forth questions of astrology,
Which Faustus answer'd with such learned skill
As they admir'd and wonder'd at his wit.
Now is his fame spread forth in every land:
Amongst the rest the Emperor is one,
Carolus the Fifth, at whose palace now

Faustus is feasted 'mongst his noblemen.
What there he did, in trial of his art,
I leave untold; your eyes shall see('t) perform'd. (Exit.

Enter ROBIN *the Ostler, with a book in his hand*

Robin.—O, this is admirable! here I ha' stolen one of Doctor Faustus' conjuring books, and, i'faith, I mean to search some circles for my own use. Now will I make all the maidens in our parish dance at my pleasure, stark naked, before me; and so by that means I shall see more than e'er I felt or saw yet.

Enter RALPH, *calling* ROBIN

Ralph.—Robin, prithee, come away; there's a gentleman tarries to have his horse, and he would have his things rubbed and made clean; he keeps such a chafing with my mistress about it; and she has set me to look thee out; prithee, come away.

Robin.—Keep out, keep out, or else you are blown up, you are dismembered, Ralph: keep out, for I am about a roaring piece of work.

Ralph.—Come, what doest thou with that same book? thou canst not read?

Robin.—Yes, my master and mistress shall find that I can read, he for his forehead, she for her private study; she's born to bear with me, or else my art fails.

Ralph.—Why, Robin, what book is that?

Robin.—What book! why, the most intolerable book for conjuring that e'er was invented by any brimstone devil.

Ralph.—Canst thou conjure with it?

Robin.—I can do all these things easily with it; first, I can make thee drunk with ippocras at any tavern in Europe for nothing; that's one of my conjuring works.

Ralph.—Our Master Parson says that's nothing.

Robin.—True, Ralph: and more, Ralph, if thou hast any mind to Nan Spit, our kitchen-maid, then turn her and wind her to thy own use, as often as thou wilt, and at midnight.

Ralph.—O, brave, Robin! shall I have Nan Spit, and to mine own use? On that condition I'll feed thy devil with horse-bread as long as he lives, of free cost.

Robin.—No more, sweet Ralph: let's go and make clean our boots, which lie foul upon our hands, and then to our conjuring in the devil's name. (Exeunt.

Enter ROBIN *and* RALPH *with a silver goblet*

Robin.—Come, Ralph; did not I tell thee, we were for ever made by this Doctor Faustus' book? *ecce, signum!* here's a simple purchase for horse-keepers: our horses shall eat no hay as long as this lasts.

Ralph.—But, Robin, here comes the Vintner.

Robin.—Hush! I'll gull him supernaturally.

Enter Vintner

Drawer, I hope all is paid; God be with you!—Come, Ralph.

Vint.—Soft, sir; a word with you. I must yet have a goblet paid from you, ere you go.

Robin.—I a goblet, Ralph, I a goblet!—I scorn you; and you are but a, etc. I a goblet! search me.

Vint.—I mean so, sir, with your favour. (Searches Robin.

Robin.—How say you now?

Vint.—I must say somewhat to your fellow.—You, sir!

Robin.—Me, sir! me, sir! search your fill. (Vintner searches him.) Now, sir, you may be ashamed to burden honest men with a matter of truth.

Vint.—Well, one of you hath this goblet about you.

Robin.—You lie, drawer, 'tis afore me (Aside).—Sirrah you, I'll teach you to impeach honest men;—stand by;—I'll scour you for a goblet;—stand aside you had best, I charge you in the name of Belzezub.—Look to the goblet, Ralph (Aside to Ralph).

Vint.—What mean you, sirrah?

Robin.—I'll tell you what I mean. (Reads from a book) *Sanctobulorum Periphrasticon*—nay, I'll tickle you, Vintner.—Look to the goblet, Ralph (Aside to Ralph).—(Reads) *Polypragmos Belseborams framanto pacostiphos tostu, Mephistophilis,* etc.

Enter MEPHISTOPHILIS, *sets squibs at their backs, and then exit. They run about*

Vint.—*O, nomine Domini!* what meanest thou, Robin? thou hast no goblet.

Ralph.—*Peccatum peccatorum!*—Here's thy goblet, good Vintner. (Gives the goblet to Vintner, who exist.

Robin.—*Misericordia pro nobis!* what shall I do? Good devil, forgive me now, and I'll never rob thy library more.

Re-enter MEPHISTOPHILIS

Meph.—Monarch of hell, under whose black survey
Great potentates do kneel with awful fear,
Upon whose altars thousand souls do lie,
How am I vexed with these villains' charms?
From Constantinople am I hither come,
Only for pleasure of these damned slaves.

Robin.—How, from Constantinople! you have had a great journey: will you take sixpence in your purse to pay for your supper, and be gone?

Meph.—Well, villains, for your presumption, I transform thee into an ape, and thee into a dog; and so be gone! (Exit.

Robin.—How, into an ape! that's brave: I'll have fine sport with the boys; I'll get nuts and apples enow.

Ralph.—And I must be a dog.

Robin.—I'faith, thy head will never be out of the pottage-pot.
(Exeunt.

Enter EMPEROR, FAUSTUS, *and a* Knight, *with* Attendants

Emp.—Master Doctor Faustus, I have heard strange reports of thy knowledge in the black art, how that none in my empire nor in the whole world can compare with thee for the rare effects of magic: they say thou hast a familiar spirit, by whom thou canst accomplish what thou list. This, therefore, is my request, that thou let me see some proof of thy skill, that mine eyes may be witnesses to confirm what mine ears have heard reported: and here I swear to thee, by the honour of mine imperial crown, that, whatever thou doest, thou shalt be no ways prejudiced or endamaged.

Knight.—I'faith, he looks much like a conjurer. (Aside.

Faust.—My gracious sovereign, though I must confess myself far inferior to the report men have published, and nothing answerable to the honour of your imperial majesty, yet, for that love and duty binds me thereunto, I am content to do whatsoever your majesty shall command me.

Emp.—Then, Doctor Faustus, mark what I say.
As I was sometimes solitary set
Within my closet, sundry thoughts arose
About the honour of mine ancestors,
How they had won by prowess such exploits,
Got such riches, subdu'd so many kingdoms,
As we that do succeed, or they that shall
Hereafter possess our throne, shall
(I fear me) ne'er attain to that degree

Of high renown and great authority:
Amongst which kings is Alexander the Great,
Chief spectacle of the world's pre-eminence,
The bright shining of whose glorious acts
Lightens the world with his reflecting beams,
As when I hear but motion made of him,
It grieves my soul I never saw the man:
If, therefore, thou, by cunning of thine art,
Canst raise this man from hollow vaults below,
Where lies entomb'd this famous conqueror,
And bring with him this beauteous paramour,
Both in their right shapes, gesture, and attire
They us'd to wear during their time of life,
Thou shalt both satisfy my just desire,
And give me cause to praise thee whilst I live.

Faust.—My gracious lord, I am ready to accomplish your request, so far forth by art and power of my spirit I am able to perform.

Knight.—I'faith, that's just nothing at all. (Aside.

Faust.—But, if it like your grace, it is not in my ability to present before your eyes the true substantial bodies of those two deceased princes, which long since are consumed to dust.

Knight.—Ay, marry, Master Doctor, now there's a sign of grace in you, when you will confess the truth. (Aside.

Faust.—But such spirits as can lively resemble Alexander and his paramour shall appear before your grace, in that manner that they both lived in, in their most flourishing estate; which I doubt not shall sufficiently content your imperial majesty.

Emp.—Go to, Master Doctor; let me see them presently.

Knight.—Do you hear, Master Doctor? you bring Alexander and his paramour before the Emperor!

Faust.—How then, sir?

Knight.—I'faith, that's as true as Diana turned to a stag.

Faust.—No, sir; but, when Actæon died, he left the horns for you.—Mephistophilis, be gone. (Exit Mephistophilis.

Knight.—Nay, an you go to conjuring, I'll be gone. (Exit.

Faust.—I'll meet with you anon for interrupting me so.—Here they are, my gracious lord.

Re-enter MEPHISTOPHILIS *with* Spirits *in the Shape of* ALEXANDER *and his* Paramour

Emp.—Master Doctor, I heard this lady, while she lived, had a wart or mole in her neck: how shall I know whether it be so or no?

Faust.—Your highness may boldly go and see.
Emp.—Sure, these are no spirits, but the true substantial bodies of those two deceased princes. (Exeunt Spirits.
Faust.—Wilt please your highness now to send for the knight that was so pleasant with me here of late?
Emp.—One of you call him forth. (Exit Attendant.

Re-enter the Knight *with a pair of horns on his head*

How now, sir knight! why, I had thought thou hadst been a bachelor, but now I see thou hast a wife, that not only gives thee horns, but makes thee wear them. Feel on thy head.

Knight.—Thou damned wretch and execrable dog,
Bred in the concave of some monstrous rocks,
How dar'st thou thus abuse a gentleman?
Villain, I say, undo what thou hast done!

Faust.—O, not so fast, sir! there's no haste: but, good, are you remembered how you crossed me in my conference with the Emperor? I think I have met with you for it.

Emp.—Good Master Doctor, at my entreaty release him: he hath done penance sufficient.

Faust.—My gracious lord, not so much for the injury he offered me here in your presence, as to delight you with some mirth, hath Faustus worthily requited this injurious knight; which being all I desire, I am content to release him of his horns: —and, sir knight, hereafter speak well of scholars.—Mephistophilis, transform him straight. (Mephistophilis removes the horns.)—Now, my good lord, having done my duty, I humbly take my leave.

Emp.—Farewell, Master Doctor: yet, ere you go,
Expect from me a bounteous reward.
(Exeunt Emperor, Knight, and attendants.

Faust.—Now, Mephistophilis, the restless course
That time doth run with calm and silent foot,
Shortening my days and thread of vital life,
Calls for the payment of my latest years:
Therefore, sweet Mephistophilis, let us
Make haste to Wertenberg.

Meph.—What, will you go on horse-back or on foot?

Faust.—Nay, till I'm past this fair and pleasant green,
I'll walk on foot.

Enter a Horse-courser

Horse-c.—I have been all this day seeking one Master Fustian: mass, see where he is!—God save you Master Doctor!

Faust.—What, horse-courser! you are well met.

Horse-c.—Do you hear, sir? I have brought you forty dollars for your horse.

Faust.—I cannot sell him so: if thou likest him for fifty, take him.

Horse-c.—Alas, sir, I have no more!—I pray you, speak for me.

Meph.—I pray you, let him have him: he is an honest fellow, and he has a great charge, neither wife nor child.

Faust.—Well, come, give me your money (Horse-courser gives Faustus the money): my boy will deliver him to you. But I must tell you one thing before you have him; ride him not into the water, at any hand.

Horse-c.—Why, sir, will he not drink of all waters?

Faust.—O, yes, he will drink of all waters; but ride him not into the water; ride him over hedge or ditch, or where thou wilt, but not into the water.

Horse-c.—Well, sir.—Now am I made man for ever: I'll not leave my horse for forty: if he had but the quality of hey-ding-ding, hey-ding-ding, I'd make a brave living on him: he has a buttock as slick as an eel (Aside).—Well, God b'wi'ye, sir: your boy will deliver him me: but, hark you, sir; if my horse be sick or ill at ease if I bring his water to you, you'll tell me what it is?

Faust.—Away, you villain! what, dost think I am a horse-doctor?

(Exit Horse-courser.

What art thou, Faustus, but a man condemn'd to die?
Thy fatal time doth draw to final end;
Despair doth drive distrust into my thoughts:
Confound these passions with a quiet sleep:
Tush, Christ did call the thief upon the Cross;
Then rest thee, Faustus, quiet in conceit.

(Sleeps in his chair.

Re-enter Horse-courser, *all wet, crying*

Horse-c.—Alas, alas! Doctor Fustian, quotha? mass, Doctor Lopus was never such a doctor: has given me a purgation, has purged me of forty dollars; I shall never see them more. But yet, like an ass as I was, I would not be ruled by him, for he bade me I should ride him into no water; now I, thinking my horse had had some rare quality than he would not have had me know of, I, like a venturous youth, rid him into the deep pond at the town's end. I was no sooner in the middle of the pond, but my horse vanished away, and I sat upon a bottle of hay, never so near drowning in my life. But I'll seek out my doctor, and have my forty dollars again, or I'll make it the dearest horse!—O, yonder is his

snipper-snapper. Do you hear? you, hey-pass, where's your master?

Meph.—Why, sir, what would you? you cannot speak with him.

Horse-c..—But I will speak with him.

Meph.—Why, he's fast asleep: come some other time.

Horse-c.—I'll speak with him now, or I'll break his glass-windows about his ears.

Meph.—I tell thee, he has not slept this eight nights.

Horse-c.—And he have not slept this eight weeks, I'll speak with him.

Meph.—See, where he is, fast asleep.

Horse-c.—Ay, this is he.—God save you, Master Doctor, Master Doctor, Master Doctor Fustian! forty dollars, forty dollars for a bottle of hay!

Meph.—Why, thou seest he hears thee not.

Horse-c.—So-ho, ho! so-ho, ho! (Hollows in his ear.) No, will you not wake? I'll make you wake ere I go. (Pulls Faustus by the leg, and pulls it away.) Alas, I am undone! what shall I do?

Faust.—O, my leg, my leg!—Help, Mephistophilis! call the officers.—My leg, my leg!

Meph.—Come, villain, to the constable.

Horse-c.—O Lord, sir, let me go, and I'll give you forty dollars' more!

Meph.—Where be they?

Horse-c.—I have none about me: come to my ostry, and I'll give them you.

Meph.—Be gone quickly. (Horse-courser runs away.

Faust.—What, is he gone? farewell he! Faustus has his leg again, and the Horse-courser, I take it, a bottle of hay for his labour: well, this trick shall cost him forty dollars more.

Enter WAGNER

How now, Wagner! what's the news with thee?

Wag.—Sir, the Duke of Vanholt doth earnestly entreat your company.

Faust.—The Duke of Vanholt! an honourable gentleman, to whom I must be no niggard of my cunning.—Come, Mephistophilis, let's away to him. (Exeunt.

Enter the DUKE OF VANHOLT, *the* DUCHESS, *and* FAUSTUS

Duke.—Believe me, Master Doctor, this merriment hath much pleased me.

Faust.—My gracious lord, I am glad it contents you so well.—But it may be, madam, you take no delight in this. I have heard that great-bellied women do long for some dainties or other: what is it, madam? tell me, and you shall have it.

Duchess.—Thanks, good Master Doctor: and, for I see your courteous intent to pleasure me, I will not hide from you the thing my heart desires; and, were it now summer, as it is January and the dead time of the winter, I would desire no better meat than a dish of ripe grapes.

Faust.—Alas, madam, that's nothing!—Mephistophilis, be gone. (Exit Mephistophilis.) Were it a greater thing than this, so it would content you, you should have it.

Re-enter MEPHISTOPHILIS *with grapes*

Here they be, madam: wilt please you taste on them?

Duke.—Believe me, Master Doctor, this makes me wonder above the rest, that being in the dead time of winter and in the month of January, how you should come by these grapes.

Faust.—If it like your grace, the year is divided into two circles over the whole world, that, when it is here winter with us, in the contrary circle it is summer with them, as in India, Saba, and farther countries in the east; and by means of a swift spirit that I have, I had them brought hither, as you see.—How do you like them, madam? be they good?

Duchess.—Believe me, Master Doctor, they be the best grapes that e'er I tasted in my life before.

Faust.—I am glad they content you so, madam.

Duke.—Come, madam, let us in, where you must well reward this learned man for the great kindness he hath showed to you.

Duchess.—And so I will, my lord; and, whilst I live, rest beholding for this courtesy.

Faust.—I humbly thank your grace.

Duke.—Come, Master Doctor, follow us, and receive your reward.

(Exeunt.

Enter WAGNER

Wag.—I think my master means to die shortly,
For he hath given to me all his goods:
And yet, methinks, if that death were near,
He would not banquet, and carouse, and swill
Amongst the students, as even now he doth,
Who are at supper with such belly-cheer
As Wagner ne'er beheld in all his life.
See, where they come! belike the feast is ended. (Exit.

Enter FAUSTUS *with two or three* Scholars, *and* MEPHISTOPHILIS

First Schol.—Master Doctor Faustus, since our conference about fair ladies, which was the beautifulest in all the world, we have determined with ourselves that Helen of Greece was the

admirablest lady that ever lived: therefore, Master Doctor, if you will do us that favour, as to let us see that peerless dame of Greece, whom all the world admires for majesty, we should think ourselves much beholding unto you.

Faust.—Gentlemen,
For that I know your friendship is unfeign'd,
And Faustus' custom is not to deny
The just requests of those that wish him well
You shall behold that peerless dame of Greece,
No otherways for pomp and majesty
And brought the spoils to rich Dardania.
Than when Sir Paris cross'd the seas with her,
Be silent, then, for danger is in words.

(Music sounds, and Helen passeth over the stage.

Sec. Schol.—Too simple is my wit to tell her praise,
Whom all the world admires for majesty.

Third Schol.—No marvel though the angry Greeks pursu'd
With ten years' war the rape of such a queen,
Whose heavenly beauty passeth all compare.

First Schol.—Since we have seen the pride of Nature's works,
And only paragon of excellence,
Let us depart; and for this glorious deed
Happy and blest be Faustus evermore!

Faust.—Gentlemen, farewell: the same I wish to you.

(Exeunt Scholars.

Enter an Old Man

Old Man.—Ah, Doctor Faustus, that I might prevail
To guide thy steps unto the way of life,
By which sweet path thou mayst attain the goal
That shall conduct thee to celestial rest!
Break heart, drop blood, and mingle it with tears,
Tears falling from repentant heaviness
Of thy most vile and loathsome filthiness,
The stench whereof corrupts the inward soul
With such flagitious crimes of heinous sin
As no commiseration may expel,
But mercy, Faustus, of thy Saviour sweet,
Whose blood alone must wash away thy guilt.

Faust.—Where art thou, Faustus? wretch, what hast thou done?
Damn'd art thou, Faustus, damn'd; despair and die!
Hell calls for right, and with a roaring voice
Says, "Faustus, come; thine hour is almost come;"
And Faustus now will come to do thee right.

(Mephistophilis gives him a dagger.

Old Man.—Ah, stay, good Faustus, stay thy desperate steps!
I see an angel hovers o'er thy head,
And, with a vial full of precious grace,
Offers to pour the same into thy soul:
Then call for mercy, and avoid despair.
Faust.—Ah, my sweet friend, I feel
Thy words to comfort my distressed soul!
Leave me a while to ponder on my sins.
Old Man.—I go, sweet Faustus; but with heavy cheer,
Fearing the ruin of thy hopeless soul. (Exit.
Faust.—Accursed Faustus, where is mercy now?
I do repent; and yet I do despair:
Hell strives with grace for conquest in my breast:
What shall I do to shun the snares of death?
Meph.—Thou traitor, Faustus, I arrest thy soul
For disobedience to my sovereign lord:
Revolt, or I'll in piece-meal tear thy flesh.
Faust.—Sweet Mephistophilis, entreat thy lord
To pardon my unjust presumption,
And with my blood again I will confirm
My former vow I made to Lucifer.
Meph.—Do it, then, quickly, with unfeigned heart,
Lest greater danger do attend thy drift.
Faust.—Torment, sweet friend, that base and crooked age,
That durst dissuade me from thy Lucifer,
With greatest torments that our hell affords.
Meph.—His faith is great; I cannot touch his soul;
But what I may afflict his body with
I will attempt, which is but little worth.
Faust.—One thing, good servant, let me crave of thee,
To glut the longing of my heart's desire,—
That I might have unto my paramour
That heavenly Helen which I saw of late,
Whose sweet embracings may extinguish clean
Those thoughts that do dissuade me from my vow,
And keep mine oath I made to Lucifer.
Meph.—Faustus, this, or what else thou shalt desire,
Shall be perform'd in twinkling of an eye.

Re-enter HELEN

Faust.—Was this the face that launch'd a thousand ships,
And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?—
Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss.—
(Kisses her.
Her lips suck forth my soul: see, where it flies!—

Come, Helen, come, give me my soul again.
Here will I dwell, for heaven is in these lips,
And all is dross that is not Helena.
I will be Paris, and for love of thee,
Instead of Troy, shall Wertenberg be sack'd;
And I will combat with weak Menelaus,
And wear thy colours on my plumed crest;
Yes, I will wound Achilles in the heel,
And then return to Helen for a kiss.
O, thou art fairer than the evening air
Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars
Brighter art thou than flaming Jupiter
When he appear'd to hapless Semele;
More lovely than the monarch of the sky
In wanton Arethusa's azur'd arms;
And none but thou shalt be my paramour! (Exeunt.

Enter the Old Man

Old Man.—Accursed Faustus, miserable man,
That from the soul exclud'st the grace of heaven,
And fly'st the throne of his tribunal-seat!

Enter Devils

Satan begins to sift me with his pride:
As in this furnace God shall try my faith,
My faith, vile hell, shall triumph over thee,
Ambitious fiends, see how the heavens smile
At your repulse, and laugh your state to scorn!
Hence, hell! for hence I fly unto my God.
(Exeunt—on one side, Devils, on the other, Old Man.

Enter FAUSTUS, with Scholars

Faust.—Ah, gentlemen!
First Schol.—What ails Faustus?
Faust.—Ah, my sweet chamber-fellow, had I lived with thee, then had I lived still! but now I die eternally. Look, comes he not? comes he not?
Sec. Schol.—What means Faustus?
Third Schol.—Belike he is grown into some sickness by being over-solitary.
First Schol.—If it be so, we'll have physicians to cure him.—'Tis but a surfeit; never fear, man.
Faust.—A surfeit of deadly sin, that hath damned both body and soul.

Sec. Schol.—Yet, Faustus, look up to heaven; remember God's mercies are infinite.

Faust.—But Faustus' offence can ne'er be pardoned: the serpent that tempted Eve may be saved, but not Faustus. Ah, gentlemen, hear me with patience, and tremble not at my speeches! Though my heart pants and quivers to remember that I have been a student here these thirty years, O, would I have never seen Wertenberg, never read book! and what wonders I have done, all Germany can witness, yea, all the world; for which Faustus hath lost both Germany and the world, yea, heaven itself, heaven, the seat of God, the throne of the blessed, the kingdom of joy; and must remain in hell for ever, hell, ah, hell, for ever! Sweet friends, what shall become of Faustus, being in hell for ever?

Third Schol.—Yet, Faustus, call on God.

Faust.—On God, whom Faustus hath abjured! on God, whom Faustus hath blasphemed! Ah, my God, I would weep! but the devil draws in my tears. Gush forth blood, instead of tears! yea, life and soul! O, he stays my tongue! I would lift up my hands; but see, they hold them, they hold them!

All.—Who, Faustus?

Faust.—Lucifer and Mephistophilis. Ah, gentlemen, I gave them my soul for my cunning!

All.—God forbid!

Faust.—God forbade it, indeed; but Faustus hath done it: for vain pleasure of twenty-four years hath Faustus lost eternal joy and felicity. I writ them a bill with mine own blood: the date is expired; the time will come, and he will fetch me.

First Schol.—Why did not Faustus tell us of this before, that divines might have prayed for thee?

Faust.—Oft have I thought to have done so; but the devil threatened to tear me in pieces, if I named God, to fetch both body and soul, if I once gave ear to divinity: and now 'tis too late. Gentlemen, away, lest you perish with me.

Sec. Schol.—O, what shall we do to save Faustus?

Faust.—Talk not of me, but save yourselves, and depart.

Third Schol.—God will strengthen me; I will stay with Faustus.

First Schol.—Tempt not God, sweet friend; but let us into the next room, and there pray for him.

Faust.—Ay, pray for me, pray for me; and what noise soever ye hear, come not unto me, for nothing can rescue me.

Sec. Schol.—Pray thou, and we will pray that God may have mercy upon thee.

Faust.—Gentlemen, farewell: if I live till morning, I'll visit you; if not, Faustus is gone to hell.

All.—Faustus, farewell.

(Exeunt Scholars.—The clock strikes eleven.

Faust.—Ah, Faustus.

Now hast thou but one bare hour to live,
And then thou must be damn'd perpetually!
Stand still, you ever-moving spheres of heaven,
That time may cease, and midnight never come;
Fair Nature's eye, rise, rise again, and make
Perpetual day; or let this hour be but
A year, a month, a week, a natural day,
That Faustus may repent and save his soul!
O lente, lente currite, noctis equi!
The stars move still, time runs, the clock will strike,
The devil will come, and Faustus must be damn'd.
O, I'll leap up to my God!—Who pulls me down?—
See, see, where Christ's blood streams in the firmament!
One drop would save my soul, half a drop: ah, my Christ!—
Ah, rend not my heart for naming of my Christ!
Yet will I call on him: O, spare me, Lucifer!—
Where is it now? 'tis gone: and see, where God
Stretcheth out his arm, and bends his ireful brows!
Mountains and hills, come, come, and fall on me,
And hide me from the heavy wrath of God!
No, no!
Then will I headlong run into the earth:
Earth, gape! O, no, it will not harbour me!
You stars that reign'd at my nativity,
Whose influence hath allotted death and hell
Now draw up Faustus, like a foggy mist,
Into the entrails of yon labouring clouds,
That, when you vomit forth into the air,
My limbs may issue from your smoky mouths,
So that my soul may but ascend to heaven!

(The clock strikes the half-hour.

Ah, half the hour is past! 'twill all be past anon.
O God,
If thou wilt not have mercy on my soul,
Yet for Christ's sake, whose blood hath ransom'd me,
Impose some end to my incessant pain;
Let Faustus live in hell a thousand years,
A hundred thousand, and at last be sav'd
O, no end is limited to damned souls!
Why wert thou not a creature wanting soul?

Or why is this immortal that thou hast?
Ah, Pythagoras' metempsychosis, were that true,
This soul should fly from me, and I be chang'd
Unto some brutish beast! all beasts are happy,
For, when they die,
Their souls are soon dissolv'd in elements;
But mine must live still to be plagu'd in hell.
Curs'd be the parents that engender'd me!
No, Faustus, curse thyself, curse Lucifer
That hath depriv'd thee of the joys of heaven

(The clock strikes twelve.

O, it strikes, it strikes! Now, body, turn to air,
Or Lucifer will bear thee quick to hell!

(Thunder and lightning.

O soul, be chang'd into little water-drops,
And fall into the ocean, ne'er be found!

Enter Devils

My God, my God, look not so fierce on me!
Adders and serpents, let me breathe a while!
Ugly hell, gape not! come not, Lucifer!
I'll burn my books!—Ah, Mephistophilis!

(Exeunt Devils with Faustus.

Enter Chorus

Chor.—Cut is the branch that might have grown full straight,
And burned is Apollo's laurel-bough,
That sometimes grew within this learned man.
Faustus is gone: regard his hellish fall,
Whose fiendful fortune may exhort the wise,
Only to wonder at unlawful things,
Whose deepness doth entice such forward wits
To practise more than heavenly powers permits.

(Exit.

Terminat hora diem; terminat auctor opus.

THE ALCHEMIST

BEN JONSON'S PLAYS

(Ben Jonson, English dramatist and poet, was born in London, 1573, the son of a minister. Educated at Westminister, Jonson followed his stepfather's trade of brick-laying, but abandoned it for the Army and served in the campaign in the Netherlands. He returned to London where he married. His marriage was unhappy, and Jonson surviving his family, became actor-playwright. He was tried for killing a fellow actor in a dual, escaped death, but suffered branding and the confiscation of property, 1598. He produced many plays, "The Alchemist," in 1601, being his masterpiece. He wrote about forty masques, mostly written in collaboration with Inigo Jones, the famous English architect. These are charming and beautiful, and form some of his best work. Jonson's prose marks an advance step of Jacobean floridity. His last years were made unhappy by poverty and disease, dying in 1637. He is buried in Westminister Abbey.)

THE ALCHEMIST

TO THE LADY MOST DESERVING HER NAME AND BLOOD

LADY MARY WROTH

MADAM,—In the age of sacrifices, the truth of religion was not in the greatness and fat of the offerings, but in the devotion and zeal of the sacrificers: else what could a handful of gums have done in the sight of a hecatomb? or how might I appear at this altar, except with those affections that no less love the light and witness, than they have the conscience of your virtue? If what I offer bear an acceptable odour, and hold the first strength, it is your value of it, which remembers where, when, and to whom it was kindled. Otherwise, as the times are, there comes rarely forth that thing so full of authority or example, but by assiduity and custom grows less, and loses. This, yet, safe in your judgment (which is a SIDNEY'S) is forbidden to speak more, lest it talk or look like one of the ambitious faces of the time, who, the more they paint, are the less themselves. Your ladyship's true honourer,

TO THE READER

If thou beest more, than art an understander, and then I trust thee.

If thou art one that takest up, and but a pretender, beware of what hands thou receivest thy commodity; for thou wert never more fair in the way to be cozened, than in this age, in poetry, especially in plays: wherein, now the concupiscence of dances and of antics so reigneth, as to run away from nature, and be afraid of her, is the only point of art that tickles the spectators. But how out of purpose, and place, do I name art? When the professors are grown so obstinate contemners of it, and presumers on their own naturals, as they are deriders of all diligence that way, and, by simple mocking at the terms, when they understand not the things, think to get off wittily with their ignorance. Nay, they are esteemed the more learned, and sufficient for this, by the many, through their excellent vice of judgment. For they commend writers, as they do fencers or wrestlers; who if they come in robustuously, and put for it with a great deal of violence, are received for the braver fellows: when many times their own rudeness is the cause of their disgrace, and a little touch of their adversary gives all that boisterous force the foil. I deny not, but that these men, who always seek to do more than enough, may some time happen on something that is good, and great; but very seldom; and when it comes it doth not recompense the rest of their ill. It sticks out, perhaps, and is more eminent, because all is sordid and vile about it: as lights are more discerned in a thick darkness, than a faint shadow. I speak not this, out of a hope to do good to any man against his will; for I know, if it were put to the question of theirs and mine, the worse would find more suffrages: because the most favour common errors. But I give thee this warning, that there is a great difference between those, that, to gain the opinion of copy, utter all they can, however unfitly; and those that use election and a mean. For it is only the disease of the unskilful, to think rude things greater than polished; or scattered more numerous than composed.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Subtle, the Alchemist.
Face, the Housekeeper.
Dol Common, their Colleague.
Dapper, a Lawyer's Clerk.
Drugger, a Tobacco Man.
Lovewit, Master of the House.
Sir Epicure Mammon, a Knight.
Pertinax Surly, a Gamester.
Tribulation Wholesome, a Pastor Of Amsterdam.
Ananias, a Deacon there.
Kastril, the angry Boy.
Dame Pliant, his Sister, a Widow.
Neighbours.

Officers, Attendants, etc.

SCENE.—London

ARGUMENT

T he sickness hot, a master quit, for fear,
H is house in town, and left one servant there;
E ase him corrupted, and gave means to know

A Cheater, and his punk; who now brought low,
L eaving their narrow practice, were become
C ozeners at large; and only wanting some
H ouse to set up, with him they here contract,
E ach for a share, and all begin to act.
M uch company they draw, and much abuse.
I n casting figures, telling fortunes, news,
S elling of flies, flat bawdry with the stone,
T ill it, and they, and all in fume are gone.

PROLOGUE

Fortune, that favours fools, these two short hours,
We wish away, both for your sakes and ours,
Judging spectators; and desire, in place,
To the author justice, to ourselves but grace.
Our scene is London, 'cause we would make known,
No country's mirth is better than our own:
No clime breeds better matter for your whore,
Bawd, squire, impostor, many persons more,
Whose manners, now call'd humours, feed the stage;
And which have still been subject for the rage
Or spleen of comic writers. Though this pen
Did never aim to grieve, but better men;
Howe'er the age he lives in doth endure
The vices that she breeds, above their cure.
But when the wholesome remedies are sweet,
And in their working gain and profit meet,
He hopes to find no spirit so much diseased,
But will with such fair correctives be pleased:
For here he doth not fear who can apply.
If there be any that will sit so nigh
Unto the stream, to look what it doth run,
They shall find things, they'd think or wish were done;
They are so natural follies, but so shewn,
As even the doers may see, and yet not own.

ACT I

SCENE I.—*A Room in* Lovewit's *House*

Enter Face, *in a captain's uniform, with his sword drawn, and* Subtle *with a vial, quarreling, and followed by* Dol Common

Face.—Believe 't, I will.
Sub.—Thy worst. I fart at thee.
Dol.—Have you your wits? why, gentlemen! for love—
Face.—Sirrah, I'll strip you—
Sub.—What to do? lick figs
Out at my—
Face.—Rogue, rogue!—out of all your sleights.
Dol.—Nay, look ye, sovereign, general, are you madmen?
Sub.—O, let the wild sheep loose. I'll gum your silks
With good strong water, an you come.
Dol.—Will you have
The neighbours hear you? will you betray all?
Hark! I hear somebody.
Face.—Sirrah—
Sub.—I shall mar
All that the tailor has made, if you approach.
Face.—You most notorious whelp, you insolent slave,
Dare you do this?
Sub.—Yes, faith; yes, faith.
Face.—Why, who
Am I, my mungrel? who am I?
Sub.—I'll tell you,
Since you know not yourself.
Face.—Speak lower, rogue.
Sub.—Yes, you were once (time's not long past) the good,
Honest, plain, livery-three-pound-thrum, that kept
Your master's worship's house here in the Friars,
For the vacations—
Face.—Will you be so loud?
Sub.—Since, by my means, translated suburb-captain.
Face.—By your means, doctor dog!
Sub.—Within man's memory,
All this I speak of.
Face.—Why, I pray you, have I
Been countenanced by you, or you by me?
Do but collect, sir, where I met you first.
Sub.—I do not hear well.
Face.—Not of this, I think it.
But I shall put you in mind, sir;—at Pie-corner,

Taking your meal of steam in, from cooks' stalls,
Where, like the father of hunger, you did walk
Piteously costive, with your pinch'd-horn-nose,
And your complexion of the Roman wash,
Stuck full of black and melancholic worms,
Like powder corns shot at the artillery-yard.

Sub.—I wish you could advance your voice a little.

Face.—When you went pinn'd up in the several rags
You had raked and pick'd from dunghills, before day;
Your feet in mouldy slippers, for your kibes;
A felt of rug, and a thin threaden cloke,
That scarce would cover your no buttocks—

Sub.—So, sir!

Face.—When all your alchemy, and your algebra,
Your minerals, vegetals, and animals,
Your conjuring, cozening, and your dozens of trades,
Could not relieve your corps with so much linen
Would make you tinder, but to see a fire;
I gave you countenance, credit for your coals,
Your stills, your glasses, your materials;
Built you a furnace, drew your customers.
Advanced all your black arts; lent you, beside,
A house to practise in—

Sub.—Your master's house!

Face.—Where you have studied the more thriving skill
Of bawdry since.

Sub.—Yes, in your master's house.
You and the rats here kept possession.
Make it not strange. I know you were one could keep
The buttery-hatch still lock'd, and save the chippings,
Sell the dole beer to aqua-vitæ men,
The which, together with your Christmas vails
At post-and-pair, your letting out of counters,
Made you a pretty stock, some twenty marks,
And gave you credit to converse with cobwebs,
Here, since your mistress' death hath broke up house.

Face.—You might talk softlier, rascal.

Sub.—No, you scarab,
I'll thunder you in pieces: I will teach you
How to beware to tempt a Fury again,
That carries tempest in his hand and voice.

Face.—The place has made you valiant.

Sub.—No, your clothes.—
Thou vermin, have I ta'en thee out of dung,
So poor, so wretched, when no living thing

Would keep thee company, but a spider, a worse?
Rais'd thee from brooms, and dust, and watering-pots,
Sublimed thee, and exalted thee, and fix'd thee
In the third region, call'd our state of grace?
Wrought thee to spirit, to quintessence, with pains
Would twice have won me the philosopher's work?
Put thee in words and fashion, made thee fit
For more than ordinary fellowships?
Giv'n thee thy oaths, thy quarrelling dimensions,
Thy rules to cheat at horse-race, cock-pit, cards,
Dice, or whatever gallant tincture else?
Made thee a second in mine own great art?
And have I this for thanks? Do you rebel,
Do you fly out in the projection?
Would you be gone now?

Dol.—Gentlemen, what mean you?
Will you mar all?

Sub.—Slave, thou hadst had no name—

Dol.—Will you undo yourselves with civil war?

Sub.—Never been known, past *equi clibanum*,
The heat of horse-dung, under ground, in cellars,
Or an ale-house darker than deaf John's; been lost
To all mankind, but laundresses and tapsters,
Had not I been.

Dol.—Do you know who hears you, sovereign?

Face.—Sirrah—

Dol.—Nay, general, I thought you were civil.

Face.—I shall turn desperate, if you grow thus loud.

Sub.—And hang thyself, I care not.

Face.—Hang thee, collier,
And all thy pots, and pans, in picture, I will,
Since thou hast moved me—

Dol.—O, this will o'erthrow all.

Face.—Write thee up bawd in Paul's, have all thy tricks
Of cozening with a hollow cole, dust, scrapings,
Searching for things lost, with a sieve and sheers,
Erecting figures in your rows of houses,
And taking in of shadows with a glass,
Told in red letters; and a face cut for thee,
Worse than Gamaliel Ratsey's.

Dol.—Are you sound?
Have you your senses, masters?

Face.—I will have
A book, but barely reckoning thy impostures,
Shall prove a true philosopher's stone to printers.

Sub.—Away, you trencher-rascal!
Face.—Out, you dog-leach!
The vomit of all prisons—
Dol.—Will you be
Your own destructions, gentlemen?
Face.—Still spew'd out
For lying too heavy on the basket.
Sub.—Cheater!
Face.—Bawd!
Sub.—Cow-herd!
Face.—Conjurer!
Sub.—Cut-purse!
Face.—Witch!
Dol.—O me!
We are ruin'd, lost! have you no more regard
To your reputations? where's your judgment? 'slight,
Have yet some care of me, of your republic—
Face.—Away, this brach! I'll bring thee, rogue, within
The statute of sorcery, tricesimo tertio
Of Harry the Eighth: ay, and perhaps, thy neck
Within a noose, for laundering gold and barbing it.
Dol. (snatches Face's sword.)—You'll bring your head within
a cockscomb, will you?
And you, sir, with your menstrue—
(Dashes Subtle's vial out of his hand.
Gather it up.—
'Sdeath, you abominable pair of stinkards,
Leave off your barking, and grow one again,
Or, by the light that shines, I'll cut your throats.
I'll not be made a prey unto the marshal,
For ne'er a snarling dog-bolt of you both.
Have you together cozen'd all this while,
And all the world, and shall it now be said,
You've made most courteous shift to cozen yourselves?
You will accuse him! you will bring him in (To Face.
Within the statute! Who shall take your word?
A whoreson, upstart, apocryphal captain,
Whom not a Puritan in Blackfriars will trust
So much as for a feather: and you, too,
Will give the cause, forsooth! you will insult,
And claim a primacy in the divisions!
You must be chief! as if you only had
The powder to project with, and the work
Were not begun out of equality?
The venture tripartite? all things in common?

Without priority? 'Sdeath! you perpetual curs,
Fall to your couples again, and cozen kindly,
And heartily, and lovingly, as you should,
And lose not the beginning of a term,
Or, by this hand, I shall grow factious too,
And take my part, and quit you.

Face.—'Tis his fault;
He ever murmurs, and objects his pains,
And says, the weight of all lies upon him.

Sub.—Why, so it does.
Sustain our parts?

Sub.—Yes, but they are not equal.

Dol.—Why, if your part exceed to-day, I hope
Our may, to-morrow, match it.

Sub.—Ay, they may.

Dol.—May, murmuring mastiff! ay, and do. Death on me!
Help me to throttle him. (Seizes Sub. by the throat.

Sub.—Dorothy! mistress Dorothy!
'Ods precious, I'll do anything. What do you mean?

Dol.—Because o' your fermentation and cibation?

Sub.—Not I, by heaven—

Dol.—Your Sol and Luna—help me. (To Face.

Sub.—Would I were hang'd then! I'll conform myself.

Dol.—Will you, sir? do so then, and quickly: swear.

Sub.—What should I swear?

Dol.—To leave your faction, sir,
And labour kindly in the common work.

Sub.—Let me not breathe if I meant aught beside.
I only used those speeches as a spur
To him.

Dol.—I hope we need no spurs, sir. Do we?

Face.—'Slid, prove to-day, who shall shark best.

Sub.—Agreed.

Dol.—Yes, and work close and friendly.

Sub.—'Slight, the knot
Shall grow the stronger for this breach, with me.
(They shake hands.

Dol.—Why, so, my good baboons! Shall we go make
A sort of sober, scurvy, precise neighbours,
That scarce have smiled twice since the king came in,
A feast of laughter at our follies? Rascals,
Would run themselves from breath, to see me ride,
Or you t' have but a hole to thrust your heads in,
For which you should pay ear-rent? No, agree.
And may don Provost ride a feasting long,

In his old velvet jerkin and stain'd scarfs,
My noble sovereign, and worthy general,
Ere we contribute a new crewel garter
To his most worsted worship.

Sub.—Royal Dol!
Spoken like Claridiana, and thyself.

Face.—For which at supper, thou shalt sit in triumph,
And not be styled Dol Common, but Dol Proper,
Dol Singular: the longest cut at night,
Shall draw thee for his Doll Particular.

(Bell rings without.

Sub.—Who's that? one rings. To the window, Dol: (Exit Dol.)
—pray heaven,
The master do not trouble us this quarter.

Face.—O, fear not him. Whil ethere dies one a week
O' the plague, he's safe, from thinking toward London:
Beside, he's busy at his hop-yards now;
I had a letter from him. If he do,
He'll send such word, for airing of the house,
As you shall have sufficient time to quit it:
Though we break up a fortnight, 'tis no matter.

Re-enter Dol

Sub.—Who is it, Dol?
Dol.—A fine young quodling.
Face.—O.
My lawyer's clerk, I lighted on last night,
In Holborn, at the Dagger. He would have
(I told you of him) a familiar,
To rifle with at horses, and win cups.
Dol.—O, let him in.
Sub.—Stay. Who shall do't?
Face.—Get you
Your robes on: I will meet him as going out.
Dol.—And what shall I do?
Face.—Not be seen; away! (Exit Dol.
Seem you very reserv'd.
Sub.—Enough. (Exit.
Face (aloud and retiring.)—God be wi' you, sir,
I pray you let him know that I was here:
His name is Dapper. I would gladly have staid, but—
Dap. (within.)—Captain, I am here.
Face.—Who's that?—He's come, I think, doctor.

Enter DAPPER

Good faith, sir, I was going away.
Dap.—In truth,
I am very sorry, captain.
Face.—But I thought
Sure I should meet you.
Dap.—Ay, I am very glad.
I had a scurvy writ or two to make,
And I had lent my watch last night to one
That dines to-day at the sheriff's, and so was robb'd
Of my past-time.

Re-enter SUBTLE, *in his velvet Cap and Gown*

Is this the cunning-man?
Face.—This is his worship.
Dap.—Is he a doctor?
Face.—Yes.
Dap.—And you have broke with him, captain?
Face.—Ay.
Dap.—And how?
Face.—Faith, he does make the matter, sir, so dainty
I know not what to say.
Dap.—Not so, good captain.
Face.—Would I were fairly rid of it, believe me.
Dap.—Nay, now you grieve me sir. Why should you wish so?
I dare assure you, I'll not be ungrateful.
Face.—I cannot think you will, sir. But the law
Is such a thing—and then he says, Read's matter
Falling so lately.
Dap.—Read! he was an ass,
And dealt, sir, with a fool.
Face.—It was a clerk, sir.
Dap.—A clerk!
Face.—Nay, hear me, sir, you know the law
Better, I think—
Dap.—I should, sir, and the danger:
You know, I shew'd the statue to you.
Face.—You did so.
Dap.—And will I tell then! By this hand of flesh,
Would it might never write good court-hand more,
If I discover. What do you think of me,
That I am a chiaus?
Face.—What's that?
Dap.—The Turk was here.

As one would say, do you think I am a Turk?
Face.—I'll tell the doctor so.
Dap.—Do, good sweet captain.
Face.—Come, noble doctor, pray thee let's prevail;
This is the gentleman, and he is no chiaus.
Sub.—Captain, I have return'd you all my answer.
I would do much, sir, for your love—But this
I neither may, nor can.
Face.—Tut, do not say so.
You deal now with a noble fellow, doctor,
One that will thank you richly; and he is no chiaus:
Let that, sir, move you.
Sub.—Pray you, forbear—
Face.—He has
Four angels here.
Sub.—You do me wrong, good sir.
Face.—Doctor, wherein? to tempt you with these spirits?
Sub.—To tempt my art and love, sir, to my peril.
Fore heaven, I scarce can think you are my friend,
That so would draw me to apparent danger.
Face.—I draw you! a horse draw you, and a halter,
You, and your flies together—
Dap.—Nay, good captain.
Face.—That know no difference of men.
Sub.—Good words, sir.
Face.—Good deeds, sir, doctor dogs-meat. Slight, I bring you
No cheating Clim o' the Cloughs, or Claribels,
That look as big as five-and-fifty, and flush;
And spit out secrets like hot custard—
Dap.—Captain!
Face.—Nor any melancholic under-scribe,
Shall tell the vicar; but a special gentle,
That is the heir to forty marks a year,
Consorts with the small poets of the time,
Is the sole hope of his old grandmother;
That knows the law, and writes you six fair hands,
Is a fine clerk, and has his cyphering perfect,
Will take his oath o' the Greek Testament,
If need be, in his pocket; and can court
His mistress out of Ovid.
Dap.—Nay, dear captain—
Face.—Did you not tell me so?
Dap.—Yes; but I'd have you
Use master doctor with some more respect.
Face.—Hang him, proud stag, with his broad velvet head!—

But for your sake, I'd choak, ere I would change
An article of breath with such a puckfist:
Come, let's be gone. (Going.
Sub.—Pray you let me speak with you.
Dap.—His worship calls you, captain.
Face.—I am sorry
I e're embarked myself in such a business.
Dap.—Nay, good sir; he did call you.
Face.—Will he take then?
Sub.—First, hear me—
Face.—Not a syllable, 'less you take.
Sub.—Pray you, sir—
Face.—Upon no terms, but an assumpsit.
Sub.—Your humour must be law. (He takes the four angels.
Face.—Why now, sir, talk.
Now I dare hear you with mine honour. Speak.
So may this gentleman too.
Sub.—Why, sir— (Offering to whisper Face.
Face.—No whispering.
Sub.—Fore heaven, you do not apprehend the loss
You do yourself in this.
Face.—Wherein? for what?
Sub.—Marry, to be so importunate for one,
That, when he has it, will undo you all:
He'll win up all the money in the town.
Face.—How!
Sub.—Yes, and blow up gamester after gamester,
As they do crackers in a puppet play.
If I do give him a familiar,
Give you him all you play for; never set him:
For he will have it.
Face.—You are mistaken, doctor.
Why he does ask one but for cups and horses,
A rifling fly; none of your great familiars.
Dap.—Yes, captain, I would have it for all games.
Sub.—I told you so.
Face. (taking Dap. aside.)—'Slight, that is a new business!
I understand you, a tame bird, to fly
Twice in a term, or so, on Friday nights,
When you had let the office, for a nag
Of forty and fifty shillings.
Rap.—Ay, 'tis true sir;
But I do think now I shall leave the law,
And therefore—
Face.—Why, this changes quite the case.

Do you think that I dare move him?
Dap.—If you please, sir;
All's one to him, I see.
Face.—What! for that money?
I cannot with my conscience; nor should you
Make the request, methinks.
Dap.—No, sir, I mean
To add consideration.
Face.—Why then, sir,
I'll try.—(Goes to Subtle). Say that it were for all games, doctor?
Sub.—I say then, not a mouth shall eat for him
At any ordinary, but on the score,
That is a gaming mouth, conceive me.
Face.—Indeed!
Sub.—He'll draw you all the treasure of the realm,
If it be set him.
Face.—Speak you this from art?
Sub.—Ay, sir, and reason too, the ground of art.
He is of the only best complexion,
The queen of Fairy loves.
Face.—What! is he?
Sub.—Peace.
He'll overhear you. Sir, should she but see him—
Face.—What?
Sub.—Do not you tell him.
Face.—Will he win at cards too?
Sub.—The spirits of dead Holland, living Isaac,
You'd swear were in him; such a vigorous luck
As cannot be resisted. 'Slight, he'll put
Six of your gallants to a cloke, indeed.
Face.—A strange success, that some man shall be born to.
Sub.—He hears you, man—
Dap.—Sir, I'll not be ingrateful.
Face.—Faith, I have confidence in his good nature:
You hear, he says he will not be ungrateful.
Sub.—Why, as you please; my venture follows yours.
Face.—Troth, do it, doctor; think him trusty, and make him.
He may make us both happy in an hour;
Win some five thousand pound, and send us two on't.
Dap.—Believe it, and I will, sir.
Face.—And you shall, sir. (Takes him aside.
You have heard all?
Dap.—No, what was't? Nothing I, sir.
Face.—Nothing!

Dap.—A little, sir.
Face.—Well, a rare star
Reign'd at your birth.
Dap.—At mine, sir! No.
Face.—The doctor
Swears that you are—
Sub.—Nay, captain, you'll tell all now.
Face.—Allied to the queen of Fairy.
Dap.—Who? that I am?
Believe it, no such matter—
Face.—Yes, and that
You were born with a cawl on your head.
Dap.—Who says so?
Face.—Come,
You know it well enough, though you dissemble it.
Dap.—I'fac, I do not: you are mistaken.
Face.—How!
Swear by your fac, and a thing so known
Unto the doctor? How shall we, sir, trust you
In the other matter? can we ever think,
When you have won five or six thousand pound,
You'll send us shares in't, by this rate?
Dap.—By Jove, sir,
I'll win ten thousand pound, and send you half.
I'fac's no oath.
Sub.—No, no, he did but jest.
Face.—Go to. Go thank the doctor: he's your friend,
To take it so.
Dap.—I thank his worship.
Face.—So!
Another angel.
Dap.—Must I?
Face.—Must you! 'slight,
What else is thanks? will you be trivial?—Doctor.
(Dapper gives him the money.
When must he come for his familiar?
Dap.—Shall I not have it with me?
Sub.—O, good sir!
There must a world of ceremonies pass;
You must be bath'd and fumigated first:
Besides the queen of Fairy does not rise
Till it be noon.
Face.—Not, if she danced, to-night.
Sub.—And she must bless it.
Face.—Did you never see

Her royal grace yet?
Dap.—Whom?
Face.—Your aunt of Fairy?
Sub.—Not since she kist him in the cradle, captain;
I can resolve you that.
Face.—Well, see her grace,
Whate'er it cost you, for a thing that I know.
It will be somewhat hard to compass; but
However, see her. You are made, believe it,
If you can see her. Her grace is a lone woman,
And very rich; and if she take a fancy,
She will do strange things. See her, at any hand.
'Slid, she may hap to leave you all she has:
It is the doctor's fear.
Dap.—How will't be done, then?
Face.—Let me alone, take you no thought. Do you
But say to me, captain, I'll see her grace.
Dap.—Captain, I'll see her grace.
Face.—Enough. (Knocking within.
Sub.—Who's there?
Anon.—Conduct him forth by the back way.—(Aside to Face.
Sir, against one o'clock prepare yourself;
Till when you must be fasting; only take
Three drops of vinegar in at your nose,
Two at your mouth, and one at either ear;
Then bathe your fingers' ends and wash your eyes,
To sharpen your five senses, and cry hum
Thrice, and then *buz* as often; and then come. (Exit.
Face.—Can you remember this?
Dap.—I warrant you.
Face.—Well then, away. It is but your bestowing
Some twenty nobles 'mong her grace's servants,
And put on a clean shirt: you do not know
What grace her grace may do you in clean linen.
(Exeunt Face and Dapper.
Sub. (within.)—Come in! Good wives, I pray you forbear me now;
Troth I can do you no good till afternoon—

Re-enters, followed by DRUGGER

What is your name, say you, Abel Drugger?
Drug.—Yes, sir.
Sub.—A seller of tobacco?
Drug.—Yes, sir.

Sub.—Umph!
Free of the grocers?
Drug.—Ay, an't please you.
Sub.—Well—
Your business, Abel?
Drug.—This, an't please your worship;
I am a young beginner, and am building
Of a new shop, an't like your worship, just
At corner of a street:—Here is the plot on't—
And I would know by art, sir, of your worship,
Which way I should make my door, by necromancy,
And where my shelves; and which should be for boxes,
And which for pots. I would be glad to thrive, sir:
And I was wish'd to your worship by a gentleman,
One captain Face, that says you know men's planets,
And their good angels, and their bad.
Sub.—I do,
If I do see them—

Re-enter FACE

Face.—What! my honest Abel?
Thou are well met here.
Drug.—Troth, sir, I was speaking,
Just as your worship came here, of your worship:
I pray you speak for me to master doctor.
Face.—He shall do any thing.—Doctor, do you hear!
This is my friend, Abel, an honest fellow;
He lets me have good tobacco, and he does not
Sophisticate it with sack-lees or oil,
Nor washes it in muscadel and grains,
Nor buries it in gravel, under ground,
Wrapp'd up in greasy leather, or piss'd clouts;
But keeps it in fine lily pots, that, open'd,
Smell like conserve of roses, or French beans.
He has his maple block, his silver tongs,
Winchester pipes, and fire of Jupiter:
A neat, spruce, honest fellow, and no goldsmith.
Sub.—He is a fortunate fellow, that I am sure on.
Face.—Already, sir, have you found it? Lo thee, Abel!
Sub.—And in right way toward riches—
Face.—Sir!
Sub.—This summer
He will be of the clothing of his company,
And next spring call'd to the scarlet; spend what he can.
Face.—What, and so little beard?

Sub.—Sir, you must think,
He may have a receipt to make hair come:
But he'll be wise, preserve his youth, and fine for't;
His fortune looks for him another way.
Face.—'Slid, doctor, how canst thou know this so soon?
I am amused at that!
Sub.—By a rule, captain,
In metoposcopy, which I do work by;
A certain star in the forehead, which you see not.
Your chestnut or your olive-colour'd face
Does never fail: and your long ear doth promise.
I knew 't by certain spots, too, in his teeth,
And on the nail of his mercurial finger.
Face.—Which finger's that?
Sub.—His little finger. Look.
You were born upon a Wednesday?
Drug.—Yes, indeed, sir.
Sub.—The thumb, in chiromancy, we give Venus;
The fore-finger, to Jove; the midst, to Saturn;
The ring, to Sol; the least, to Mercury,
Who was the lord, sir, of his horoscope,
His house of life being Libra; which fore-shew'd,
He should be a merchant, and should trade with balance.
Face.—Why, this is strange! Is it not, honest Nab?
Sub.—There is a ship now, coming from Ormus,
That shall yield him such a commodity
Of drugs—This is the west, and this the south?
(Pointing to the plan.
Drug.—Yes, sir.
Sub.—And those are your two sides?
Drug.—Ay, sir.
Sub.—Make me your door, then, south; your broad side, west:
And on the east side of your shop, aloft,
Write Mathlai, Tarmail, and Baraborat;
Upon the north part, Rael, Velel, Thiel.
They are the names of those mercurial spirits,
That do fright flies from boxes.
Drug.—Yes, sir.
Sub.—And
Beneath your threshold, bury me a load-stone
To draw in gallants that wear spurs: the rest,
They'll seem to follow.
Face.—That's a secret, Nab!
Sub.—And, on your stall, a puppet, with a vice
And a court-fucus to call city-dames:

You shall deal much with minerals.
Drug.—Sir, I have
At home, already—
Sub.—Ay, I know you have arsenic,
Vitriol, sal-tartar, argaile, alkali,
Cinoper: I know all.—This fellow, captain,
Will come, in time, to be a great distiller,
And give a say—I will not say directly,
But very fair—at the philosopher's stone.
Face.—Why, how now, Abel! is this true?
Drug.—Good captain,
What must I give? (Aside to Face.
Face.—Nay, I'll not counsel thee.
Thou hear'st what wealth (he says, spend what thou canst,)
Thou'rt like to come to.
Drug.—I would gi' him a crown.
Face.—A crown! and toward such a fortune? heart,
Thou shalt rather gi' him thy shop. No gold about thee?
Drug.—Yes, I have a portague, I have kept this half year.
Face.—Out on thee, Nab! 'Slight, there was such an offer—
Shalt keep't no longer, I'll give't him for thee. Doctor,
Nab prays your worship to drink this, and swears
He will appear more grateful, as your skill
Does raise him in the world.
Drug.—I would entreat
Another favour of his worship.
Face.—What is't, Nab?
Drug.—But to look over, sir, my almanack,
And cross out my ill days, that I may neither
Bargain, nor trust upon them.
Face.—That he shall, Nab;
Leave it, it shall be done, 'gainst afternoon.
Sub.—And a direction for his shelves.
Face.—Now, Nab,
Art thou well pleased, Nab?
Drug.—'Thank, sir, both your worships.
Face.—Away.— (Exit Drugger.
Why, now, you smoaky persecutor of nature!
Now do you see, that something's to be done,
Beside your beech-coal, and your corsive waters,
Your crosslets, crucibles, and cucurbites?
You must have stuff brought home to you, to work on:
And yet you think, I am at no expense
In searching out these veins, then following them,
Then trying them out. 'Fore God, my intelligence

Costs me more money, than my share oft comes to,
In these rare works.
Sub.—You are pleasant, sir.—

Re-enter Dol.

How now!
What says my dainty Dolkin?
Dol.—Yonder fish-wife
Will not away. And there's your giantess,
The bawd of Lambeth.
Sub.—Heart, I cannot speak with them.
Dol.—Not afore night, I have told them in a voice,
Thorough the trunk, like one of your familiars.
But I have spied sir Epicure Mammon—
Sub.—Where?
Dol.—Coming along, at far end of the lane,
Slow of his feet, but earnest of his tongue
To one that's with him.
Sub.—Face, go you, and shift, (Exit Face.
Dol, you must presently make ready, too.
Dol.—Why, what's the matter?
Sub.—O. I did look for him
With the sun's rising: 'marvel he could sleep,
This is the day I am to perfect for him
The magisterium, our great work, the stone;
And yield it, made, into his hands: of which
He has, this month, talk'd as he were possess'd.
And now he's dealing pieces on't away.—
Methinks I see him entering ordinaries,
Dispensing for the pox, and plaguy houses,
Reaching his dose, walking Moorfields for lepers,
And offering citizens' wives pomander-bracelets,
As his preservative, made of the elixir;
Searching the spittal, to make old bawds young;
And the highways, for beggars, to make rich:
I see no end of his labours. He will make
Nature asham'd of her long sleep: when art,
Who's but a step-dame, shall do more than she,
In her best love to mankind, ever could:
If his dream lasts, he'll turn the age to gold. (Exeunt.

ACT II

SCENE I.—*An Outer Room in* LOVEWIT'S *House*

Enter SIR EPICURE MAMMON *and* SURLY

Mam.—Come on, sir. Now, you set your foot on shore
In *Novo Orbe;* here's the rich Peru:
And there within, sir, are the golden mines,
Great Solomon's Ophir! he was sailing to't,
Three years, but we have reach'd it in ten months.
This is the day, wherein, to all my friends,
I will pronounce the happy word, BE RICH;
THIS DAY YOU SHALL BE SPECTATISSIMI.
You shall no more deal with the hollow dye,
Or the frail card. No more be at charge of keeping
The livery-punk for the young heir, that must
Seal, at all hours, in his shirt: no more,
If he deny, have him beaten to't, as he is
That brings him the commodity. No more
Shall thirst of satin, or the covetous hunger
Of velvet entrails for a rude-spun cloke,
To be display'd at madam Augusta's, make
The sons of Sword and Hazard fall before
The golden calf, and on their knees, whole nights
Commit idolatry with wine and trumpets:
Or go a feasting after drum and ensign.
No more of this. You shall start up young viceroys,
And have your punks, and punketees, my Surly.
And unto thee I speak it first, BE RICH.
Where is my Subtle, there? Within, ho!

Face. (within.)—Sir, he'll come to you by and by.

Mam.—That is his fire-drake,
His Lungs, his Zephyrus, he that puffs his coals,
Till he firk nature up, in her own centre.
You are not faithful, sir. This night, I'll change
All that is metal, in my house, to gold:
And, early in the morning, will I send
To all the plumbers and the pewterers,
And buy their tin and lead up; and to Lothbury
For all the copper.

Sur.—What, and turn that too?

Mam.—Yes, and I'll purchase Devonshire and Cornwall,
And make them perfect Indies! you admire now?

Sur.—No, faith.

Mam.—But when you see th' effects of the Great Medicine,
Of which one part projected on a hundred

Of Mercury, of Venus, or the moon,
Shall turn it to as many of the sun;
Nay, to a thousand, so ad infinitum:
You will believe me.

Sur.—Yes, when I see't, I will.
But if my eyes do cozen me so, and I
Giving them no occasion, sure I'll have
A whore, shall piss them out next day.

Mam.—Ha! why?
Do you think I fable with you? I assure you,
He that has once the flower of the sun,
The perfect ruby, which we call elixir,
Not only can do that, but, by its virtue,
Can confer honour, love, respect, long life;
Give safety, valour, yea, and victory,
To whom he will. In eight and twenty days,
I'll make an old man of fourscore, a child.

Sur.—No doubt; he's that already.

Mam.—Nay, I mean,
Restore his years, renew him, like an eagle,
To the fifth age; make him get sons and daughters,
Young giants; as our philosophers have done,
The ancient patriarchs, afore the flood,
But taking, once a week, on a knife's point,
The quantity of a grain of mustard of it;
Become stout Marses, and beget young Cupids.

Sur.—The decay'd vestals of Pict-hatch would thank you,
That keep the fire alive, there.

Mam.—'Tis the secret
Of nature naturis'd 'gianst all infections,
Cures all diseases coming of all causes;
A month's grief in a day, a year's in twelve;
And, of what age soever, in a month:
Past all the doses of your drugging doctors.
I'll undertake, withal, to fright the plague
Out of the kingdom in three months.

Sur.—And I'll
Be bound, the players shall sing your praises, then,
Without their poets.

Mam.—Sir, I'll do't. Mean time,
I'll give away so much unto my man,
Shall serve the whole city, with preservative,
Weekly; each house his dose, and at the rate—

Sur.—As he that built the Water-work, does with water?

Mam.—You are incredulous.

Sur.—Faith I have a humour,
I would not willingly be gull'd. Your stone
Cannot transmute me.
Mam.—Pertinax, (my) Surly,
Will you believe antiquity? records?
I'll shew you a book where Moses and his sister,
And Solomon have written of the art;
Ay, and a treatise penn'd by Adam—
Sur.—How!
Mam.—Of the philosopher's stone, and in High Dutch.
Sur.—Did Adam write, sir, in High Dutch?
Mam.—He did;
Which proves it was the primitive tongue.
Sur.—What paper?
Mam.—On cedar board.
Sur.—O that, indeed, they say,
Will last 'gainst worms.
Mam.—'Tis like your Irish wood,
'Gainst cob-webs. I have a piece of Jason's fleece, too,
Which was no other than a book of alchemy,
Writ in large sheep-skin, a good fat ram-vellum.
Such was Pythagoras' thigh, Pandora's tub,
And, all that fable of Medea's charms,
The manner of our work; the bulls, our furnace,
Still breathing fire; our argent-vive, the dragon:
The dragon's teeth, mercury sublimate,
That keeps the whiteness, hardness, and the biting:
And they are gather'd into Jason's helm,
The alembic, and then sow'd in Mars his field,
And thence sublimed so often, till they're fixed.
Both this, the Hesperian garden, Cadmus' story,
Jove's shower, the boon of Midas, Argus' eyes,
Boccace his Demogorgon, thousands more,
All abstract riddles of our stone.—

Enter FACE, *as a servant*

How now!
Do we succeed? Is our day come? and holds it?
Face.—The evening will set red upon you, sir;
You have colour for it, crimson: the red ferment
Has done his office; three hours hence prepare you
To see projection.
Mam.—Pertinax, my Surly,
Again I say to thee, aloud, Be rich.
This day, thou shalt have ingots; and, to-morrow,

Give lords th' affront.—Is it, my Zephyrus, right?
Blushes the bolt's-head?

Face.—Like a wench with child, sir,
That were but now discover'd to her master.

Mam.—Excellent witty Lungs!—my only care
Where to get stuff enough now, to project on;
This town will not half serve me.

Face.—No, sir! buy
The covering off o' churches.

Mam.—That's true.

Face.—Yes.
Let them stand bare, as do their auditory;
Or cap them, new, with shingles.

Mam.—No, good thatch:
Thatch will lie light upon the rafters, Lungs.—
Lungs, I will manumit thee from the furnace;
I will restore thee thy complexion, Puffe,
Lost in the embers; and repair this brain,
Hurt with the fume o' the metals.

Face.—I have blown, sir,
Hard for your worship; thrown by many a coal,
When 'twas not beech; weigh'd those I put in, just,
To keep your heat still even; these blear'd eyes
Have wak'd to read your several colours, sir,
Of the pale citron, the green lion, the crow,
The peacock's tail, the plumed swan.

Mam.—And, lastly,
Thou hast descry'd the flower, the sanguis agni?

Face.—Yes, sir.

Mam.—Where's master?

Face.—At his prayers, sir, he;
Good man, he's doing his devotions
For the success.

Mam.—Lungs, I will set a period
To all thy labours; thou shalt be the master
Of my seraglio.

Face.—Good, sir.

Mam.—But do you hear?
I'll geld you, Lungs.

Face.—Yes, sir.

Mam.—For I do mean
To have a list of wives and concubines,
Equal with Solomon, who had the stone
Alike with me; and I will make me a back
With the elixir, that shall be as tough

As Hercules, to encounter fifty a night.—
Thou art sure thou saw'st it blood?

Face.—Both blood and spirit, sir.

Mam.—I will have all my beds blown up, not stuft:
Down is too hard: and then, mine oval room
Fill'd with such pictures as Tiberius took
From Elephantis, and dull Aretine
But coldly imitated. Then, my glasses
Cut in more subtle angles, to disperse
And multiply the figures, as I walk
Naked between my succubæ. My mists
I'll have of perfume, vapour'd 'bout the room,
To lose ourselves in; and my baths, like pits
To fall into; from whence we will come forth,
And roll us dry in gossamer and roses.—
Is it arrived at ruby?—Where I spy
A wealthy citizen, or (a) rich lawyer,
Have a sublimed pure wife, unto that fellow
I'll send a thousand pound to be my cuckold.

Face.—And I shall carry it?

Mam.—No. I'll have no bawds,
But fathers and mothers: they will do it best,
Best of all others. And my flatterers
Shall be the pure and gravest of divines,
That I can get for money. My mere fools,
Eloquent burgesses, and then my poets
The same that writ so subtly of the fart,
Whom I will entertain still for that subject.
The few that would give out themselves to be
Court and town-stallions, and, each-where, bely
Ladies who are known most innocent for them;
Those will I beg, to make me eunuchs of:
And they shall fan me with ten ostrich tails
A-piece, made in a plume to gather wind.
We will be brave, Puffe, now we have the med'cine.
My meat shall all come in, in Indian shells,
Dishes of agat set in gold, and studded
With emeralds, sapphires, hyacinths, and rubies.
The tongues of carps, dormice, and camels' heels,
Boil'd in the spirit of sol, and dissolv'd pearl,
Apicius' diet, 'gainst the epilepsy:
And I will eat these broths with spoons of amber,
Headed with diamond and carbuncle.
My foot-boy shall eat pheasants, calver'd salmons,
Knots, godwits, lampreys: I myself will have

The beards of barbels served, instead of salads;
Oil'd mushrooms; and the swelling unctuous paps
Of a fat pregnant sow, newly cut off,
Drest with an exquisite, and poignant sauce;
For which, I'll say unto my cook, There's gold,
Go forth, and be a knight.

Face.—Sir, I'll go look
A little how it heightens. (Exit.

Mam.—Do.—My shirts
I'll have of taffeta-sarsnet, soft and light
As cobwebs; and for all my other raiment,
It shall be such as might provoke the Persian,
Were he to teach the world riot anew.
My gloves of fishes' and birds' skins, perfumed
With gums of paradise, and eastern air—

Sur.—And do you think to have the stone with this?

Mam.—No, I do think t' have all this with the stone.

Sur.—Why, I have heard, he must be *homo frugi*,
A pious, holy, and religious man,
One free from mortal sin, a very virgin.

Mam.—That makes it, sir; he is so: but I buy it;
My venture brings it me. He, honest wretch,
A notable, superstitious, good soul,
Has worn his knees bare, and his slippers bald,
With prayer and fasting for it: and sir, let him
Do it alone, for me, still. Here he comes.
Not a profane word afore him: 'tis poison.—

Enter Subtle

Good morrow, father.

Sub.—Gentle son, good morrow.
And to your friend there. What is he, is with you?

Mam.—An heretic, that I did bring along,
In hope, sir, to convert him.

Sub.—Son, I doubt
You are covetous, that thus you meet your time
In the just point: prevent your day at morning.
This argues something, worthy of a fear
Of importune and carnal appetite.
Take heed you do not cause the blessing leave you,
With your ungovern'd haste. I should be sorry
To see my labours, now even at perfection,
Got by long watching and large patience,
Not prosper where my love and zeal hath placed them.
Which (heaven I call to witness, with your self,

To whom I have pour'd my thoughts) in all my ends,
Have look'd no way, but unto public good,
To pious uses, and dear charity
Now grown a prodigy with men. Wherein
If you, my son, should now prevaricate,
And, to your own particular lusts employ
So great and catholic a bliss, be sure
A curse will follow, yea, and overtake
Your subtle and most secret ways.

Mam.—I know, sir;
You shall not need to fear me: I but come,
To have you confute this gentleman.

Sur.—Who is,
Indeed, sir, somewhat costive of belief
Toward your stone; would not be gull'd.

Sub.—Well, son,
All that I can convince him in, is this,
The WORK IS DONE, bright sol is in his robe.
We have a medicine of the triple soul,
The glorified spirit. Thanks be to heaven.
And make us worthy of it!—Ulen Spiegel!

Face.—(within) Anon, sir.

Sub.—Look well to the register.
And let your heat still lessen by degrees,
To the aludels.

Face.—(within). Yes, sir.

Sub.—Did you look
On the bolt's-head yet?

Face. (within.)—Which? on D, sir?

Sub.—Ay;
What's the complexion?

Face. (within.)—Whitish.

Sub.—Infuse vinegar,
To draw his volatile substance and his tincture:
And let the water in glass E be filter'd,
And put into the gripe's egg. Lute him well;
And leave him closed in balneo.

Face. (within.)—I will, sir.

Sur.—What a brave language here is! next to canting.

Sub.—I have another work, you never saw, son,
That three days since past the philosopher's wheel
In the lent heat of Athanor; and's become
Sulphur of Nature.

Mam.—But 'tis for me?

Sub.—What need you?

You have enough in that is perfect.
Mam.—O but—
Sub.—Why, this is covetise!
Mam.—No, I assure you,
I shall employ it all in pious uses,
Founding of colleges and grammar schools,
Marrying young virgins, building hospitals,
And now and then a church.

Re-enter FACE

Sub.—How now!
Face.—Sir, please you,
Shall I not change the filter?
Sub.—Marry, yes;
And bring he the complexion of glass B. (Exit Face.
Mam.—Have you another?
Sub.—Yes, son; were I assured—
Your piety were firm, we would not want
The means to glorify it: but I hope the best.—
I mean to tinct C in sand-heat to-morrow,
And give him imbibition.
Mam.—Of white oil?
Sub.—No, sir, of red. F is come over the helm too,
I thank my Maker, in S. Mary's bath,
And shews *lac virginis*. Blessed be heaven!
I sent you of this fæces there calcined:
Out of that calx, I have won the salt of mercury.
Mam.—By pouring on your rectified water?
Sub.—Yes, and reverberating in Athanor.

Re-enter FACE

How now! what colour says it?
Face.—The ground black, sir.
Mam.—That's your crow's head?
Sur.—Your cock's-comb's, is it not?
Sub.—No, 'tis not perfect. Would it were the crow!
That work wants something.
Sur.—O, I look'd for this.
The hay's a pitching. (Aside.
Sub.—Are you sure you loosed them
In their own menstrue?
Face.—Yes, sir, and then married them,
And put them in a bolt's-head nipp'd to digestion
According as you bade me, when I set
The liquor of Mars to circulation

In the same heat.
Sub.—The process then was right.
Face.—Yes, by the token, sir, the retort brake,
And what was saved was put into the pelican,
And sign'd with Hermes' seal.
Sub.—I think 'twas so.
We should have a new amalgama.
Sur.—O, this ferret
Is rank as any pole-cat. (Aside.
Sub.—But I care not:
Let him e'en die; we have enough beside,
In embrion. He has his white shirt on?
Face.—Yes, sir,
He's ripe for inceration, he stands warm,
In his ash-fire. I would not you should let
Any die now, if I might counsel, sir,
For luck's sake to the rest: it is not good.
Mam.—He says right.
Sur.—Ay, are you bolted? (Aside.
Face.—Nay, I know't sir,
I have seen the ill fortune. What is some three ounces
Of fresh materials?
Mam.—Is't no more?
Face.—No more, sir,
Of gold, t'amalgama with some six of mercury.
Mam.—Away, here's money. What will serve?
Face.—Ask him, sir.
Mam.—How much?
Sub.—Give him nine pound:—you may give him ten.
Sur.—Yes, twenty, and be cozen'd do.
Mam.—There 'tis. (Gives Face the money.
Sub.—This needs not; but that you will have it so,
To see conclusions of all: for two
Of our inferior works are at fixation,
A third is in ascension. Go your ways.
Have you set the oil of luna in kemia?
Face.—Yes, sir.
Sub.—And the philosopher's vinegar?
Face.—Ay. (Exit.
Sur.—We shall have a salad!
Mam.—When do you make projection?
Sub.—Son, be not hasty, I exalt our med'cine,
By hanging him *in balneo vaporoso,*
And giving him solution; then congeal him:
And then dissolve him; then again congeal him:

For look, how oft I iterate the work,
So many times I add unto his virtue.
As, if at first one ounce convert a hundred,
After his second loose, he'll turn a thousand;
His third solution, ten; his fourth, a hundred:
After his fifth, a thousand ounces
Of any imperfect metal, into pure
Silver or gold, in all examinations,
As good as any of the natural mine.
Get you your stuff here against afternoon,
Your brass, your pewter, and your andirons.

Mam.—Not those of iron?

Sub.—Yes, you may bring them too:
We'll change all metals.

Sur.—I believe you in that.

Mam.—Then I may send my spits?

Sub.—Yes, and your racks.

Sur.—And dripping pans, and pot-hangers, and hooks,
Shall he not?

Sub.—If he please.

Sur.—To be an ass.

Sub.—How, sir!

Mam.—This gentleman you must bear withal:
I told you he had no faith.

Sur.—And little hope, sir;
But much less charity, should I gull myself.

Sub.—Why, what have you observ'd, sir, in our art,
Seems so impossible?

Sur.—But your whole work, no more.
That you should hatch gold in a furnace, sir,
As they do eggs in Egypt!

Sub.—Sir, do you
Believe that eggs are hatch'd so?

Sur.—If I should?

Sub.—Why, I think that the greater miracle.
No egg but differs from a chicken more
Than metals in themselves.

Sur.—That cannot be.
The egg's ordain'd by nature to that end,
And is a chicken *in potentia.*

Sub.—The same we say of lead and other metals,
Which would be gold, if they had time.

Mam.—And that
Our art doth further.

Sub.—Ay, for 'twere absurd

To think that nature in the earth bred gold
Perfect in the instant: something went before.
There must be remote matter.

Sur.—Ay, what is that?

Sub.—Marry, we say—

Mam.—Ay, now it heats: stand, father,
Pound him to dust.

Sub.—It is, of the one part,
A humid exhalation, which we call
Materia liquida, or the unctuous water;
On the other part, a certain crass and vicious
Portion of earth; both which, concorporate,
Do make the elementary matter of gold;
Which is not yet *propria materia,*
But common to all metals and all stones;
For, where it is forsaken of that moisture,
And hath more driness, it becomes a stone:
Where it retains more of the humid fatness,
It turns to sulphur, or to quicksilver,
Who are the parents of all other metals.
Nor can this remote matter suddenly
Progress so from extreme unto extreme,
As to grow gold, and leap o'er all the means,
Nature doth first beget the imperfect, then
Proceeds she to the perfect. Of that airy
And oily water, mercury is engender'd;
Sulphur of the fat and earthy part; the one,
Which is the last, supplying the place of male,
The other of the female, in all metals.
Some do believe hermaphrodeity,
That both do act and suffer. But these two
Make the rest ductile, malleable, extensive.
And even in gold they are; for we do find
Seeds of them, by our fire, and gold in them;
And can produce the species of each metal
More perfect thence, than nature doth in earth.
Beside, who doth not see in daily practice
Art can beget bees, hornets, beetles, wasps,
Out of the carcasses and dung of creatures;
Yea, scorpions of an herb, being rightly placed?
And these are living creatures, far more perfect
And excellent than metals.

Mam.—Well said, father!
Nay, if he take you in hand, sir, with an argument,
He'll bray you in a mortar.

Sur.—Pray you, sir, stay.
Rather than I'll be bray'd, sir, I'll believe
That Alchemy is a pretty kind of game,
Somewhat like tricks o' the cards, to cheat a man
With charming.
Sub.—Sir?
Sur.—What else are all your terms,
Whereon no one of your writers 'grees with other?
Of your elixir, your *lac virginis*,
Your stone, your med'cine, and your chrysosperme,
Your sal, your sulphur, and your mercury,
Your oil of height, your tree of life, your blood,
Your marchesite, your tutie, your magnesia,
Your toad, your crow, your dragon, and your panther;
Your sun, your moon, your firmament, your adrop,
Your lato, azoch, zernich, chibrit, heautarit,
And then your red man, and your white woman,
With all your broths, your menstrues, and materials,
Of piss and egg-shells, women's terms, man's blood,
Hair o' the head, burnt clouts, chalk, merds, and clay,
Powder of bones, scalings of iron, glass,
And worlds of other strange ingredients,
Would burst a man to name?
Sub.—And all these named,
Intending but one thing: which art our writers
Used to obscure their art.
Mam.—Sir, so I told him—
Because the simple idiot should not learn it,
And make it vulgar.
Sub.—Was not all the knowledge
Of the Ægyptians writ in mystic symbols?
Speak not the scriptures oft in parables?
Are not the choicest fables of the poets,
That were the fountains and first springs of wisdom,
Wrapp'd in perplexed allegories?
Mam.—I urg'd that,
And clear'd to him, that Sysiphus was damn'd
To roll the ceaseless stone, only because
He would have made Ours common. (Dol appears at the door.)—
Who is this?
Sub.—'Specious!—What do you mean? go in, good lady,
Let me entreat you. (Dol retires)—Where's this varlet?

Re-enter FACE

Face.—Sir.
Sub.—You very knave! do you use me thus?
Face.—Wherein, sir?
Sub.—Go in and see, you traitor. Go! (Exit Face.
Mam.—Who is it, sir?
Sub.—Nothing, sir; nothing.
Mam.—What's the matter, good sir?
I have not seen you thus distemper'd: Who is't?
Sub.—All arts have still had, sir, their adversaries,
But ours the most ignorant.—

Re-enter FACE

What now?
Face.—'Twas not my fault, sir; she would speak with you.
Sub.—Would she, sir! Follow me. (Exit.
Mam.—(stopping him). Stay, Lungs.
Face.—I dare not, sir.
Mam.—Stay, man; what is she?
Face.—A lord's sister, sir.
Mam.—How! pray thee, stay.
Face.—She's mad, sir, and sent hither—
He'll be mad too—
Mam.—I warrant thee.—
Why sent hither?
Face.—Sir, to be cured.
Sub.—(within). Why, rascal!
Face.—Lo you!—Here, sir! (Exit.
Mam.—'Fore God, a Bradamante, a brave piece.
Sur.—Heart, this is a bawdy-house! I will be burnt else.
Mam.—O, by this light, no: do not wrong him. He's
Too scrupulous that way: it is his vice.
No, he's a rare physician, do him right,
An excellent Paracelsian, and has done
Strange cures with mineral physic. He deals all
With spirits, he; he will not hear a word
Of Galen, or his tedious recipes.—

Re-enter FACE

How now, Lungs!
Face.—Softly, sir; speak softly. I meant
To have told your worship all. This must not hear.
Mam.—No, he will not be "gull'd:" let him alone.
Face.—You are very right, sir, she is a most rare scholar,
And is gone mad with studying Broughton's works.

If you but name a word touching the Hebrew,
She falls into her fit, and will discourse
So learnedly of genealogies,
As you would run mad too, to hear her, sir.

Mam.—How might one do t'have conference with her, Lungs?

Face.—O divers have run mad upon the conference:
I do not know, sir. I am sent in haste,
To fetch a vial.

Sur.—Be not gull'd, sir Mammon.

Mam.—Wherein? pray ye, be patient.

Sur.—Yes, as you are,
And trust confederate knaves and bawds and whores.

Mam.—You are too foul, believe it.—Come here, Ulen,
One word.

Face.—I dare not, in good faith. (Going.

Mam.—Stay, knave.

Face.—He is extreme angry that you saw her, sir.

Mam.—Drink that. (Gives him money.) What is she when she's out of her fit?

Face.—O, the most affablest creature, sir! so merry!
So pleasant! she'll mount you up, like quicksilver
Over the helm; and circulate like oil,
A very vegetal: discourse of state.
Of mathematics, bawdry, any thing—

Mab.—Is she no way accessible? no means,
No trick to give a man a taste of her—wit—
Or so?

Sub.—(within). Ulen!

Face.—I'll come to you again, sir. (Exit.

Mam.—Surly, I did not think one of your breeding
Would traduce personages of worth.

Sur.—Sir Epicure,
Your friend to use; yet still loth to be gull'd:
I do not like your philosophical bawds.
Their stone is letchery enough to pay for,
Without this bait.

Mam.—'Heart, you abuse yourself.
I know the lady, and her friends, and means,
The original of this disaster. Her brother
Has told me all.

Sur.—And yet you never saw her
Till now!

Mam.—O yes, but I forgot. I have, believe it,
One of the treacherousest memories, I do think,
Of all mankind.

Sur.—What call you her brother?
Mam.—My lord—
He will not have his name known, now I think on't.
Sur.—A very treacherous memory!
Mam.—On my faith—
Sur.—Tut, if you have it not about you, pass it,
Till we meet next.
Mam.—Nay, by this hand, 'tis true.
He's one I honour, and my noble friend;
And I respect his house.
Sur.—Heart! can it be,
That a grave sir, a rich, that has no need,
A wise sir, too, at other times, should thus,
With his own oaths, and arguments, make hard means
To gull himself? An this be your elixir,
Your *lapis mineralis,* and your lunary,
Give we your honest trick yet at primero,
Or gleek; and take your *lutum sapientis,*
Your *menstruum simplex!* I'll have gold before you,
And with less danger of the quicksilver,
Or the hot sulphur.

Re-enter FACE

Face.—Here's one from captain Face, sir, (to Surly.)
Desires you meet him in the Temple-church,
Some half hour hence, upon earnest business.
Sir, (whispers Mammon.) is you please to quit us, now; and come
Again within two hours, you shall have
My master busy examining o' the works;
And I will steal you in, unto the party,
That you may see her converse.—Sir, shall I say,
You'll meet the captain's worship?
Sur.—Sir, I will.— (Walks aside.
But, by attorney, and to a second purpose.
Now, I am sure it is a bawdy-house;
I'll swear it, were the marshal here to thank me:
The naming this commander doth confirm it.
Don Face! why he's the most authentic dealer
In these commodities, the superintendant
To all the quainter traffickers in town!
He is the visitor, and does appoint,
Who lies with whom, and at what hour; what price:
Which gown, and in what smock; what fall; what tire.
Him will I prove, by a third person, to find

The Subtleties of this dark labyrinth:
Which if I do discover, dear sir Mammon,
You'll give your poor friend leave, though no philosopher,
To laugh: for you that are, 'tis thought, shall weep.
Face.—Sir, he does pray, you'll not forget.
Sur.—I will not, sir.
Sir Epicure, I shall leave you. (Exit.
Mam.—I follow you, straight.
Face.—But do so, good sir, to avoid suspicion.
This gentleman has a parlous head.
Mam.—But wilt thou, Ulen.
Be constant to thy promise?
Face.—As my life, sir.
Mam.—And wilt thou insinuate what I am, and praise me,
And say, I am a noble fellow?
Face.—O, what else, sir?
And that you'll make her royal with the stone,
An empress; and yourself, king of Bantam.
Mam.—Wilt thou do this?
Face.—Will I, sir!
Mam.—Lungs, my Lungs!
I love thee.
Face.—Send your stuff, sir, that my master
May busy himself about projection.
Mam.—Thou hast witch'd me, rogue: take, go.
(Gives him money.
Face.—Your jack, and all, sir.
Mam.—Thou art a villain—I will send my jack,
And the weights too. Slave, I could bite thine ear.
Away, thou dost not care for me.
Face.—Not I, sir!
Mam.—Come, I was born to make thee, my good weasel,
Set thee on a bench, and have thee twirl a chain
With the best lord's vermin of 'em all.
Face.—Away, sir.
Mam.—A count, nay, a count palatine—
Face.—Good, sir, go.
Mam.—Shall not advance thee better: no, nor faster. (Exit.

Re-enter SUBTLE *and* DOL

Sub.—Has he bit? has he bit?
Face.—And swallowed too, my Subtle.
I have given him line, and now he plays, i'faith.
Sub.—And shall we twitch him?
Face.—Through both the gills.

A wench is a rare bait, with which a man
No sooner's taken, but he straight firks mad.
Sub.—Dol, my lord What'ts'hums sister, you must now
Bear yourself *statelich.*
Dol.—O let me alone.
I'll not forget my race, I warrant you.
I'll keep my distance, laugh and talk aloud;
Have all the tricks of a proud scurvy lady,
And be as rude as her woman.
Face.—Well said, sanguine!
Sub.—But will he send his andirons?
Face.—His jack too,
And's iron shoeing horn; I have spoke to him. Well,
I must not lose my wary gamester yonder.
Sub.—O monsieur Caution, that will not be gull'd.
Face.—Ay,
If I can strike a fine hook into him, now!
The Temple-church, there I have cast mine angle.
Well, pray for me. I'll about it.
(Knocking without.
Sub.—What, more gudgeons!
Dol, scout, scout! (Dol goes to the window.) Stay, Face,
you must go to the door,
'Pray God it be my anabaptist.—Who is't, Dol?
Dol.—I know him not: he looks like a gold-endman.
Sub.—Ods so! 'tis he, he said he would send what call you him?
The sanctified elder, that should deal
For Mammon's jack and andirons. Let him in.
Stay, help me off, first, with my gown.
(Exit Face with the gown.
Away Madam, to your withdrawing chamber.
(Exit Dol.
Now,
In a new tune, new gesture, but old language.—
This fellow is sent from one negotiates with me
About the stone too; for the holy brethren
Of Amsterdam, the exiled saints; that hope
To raise their discipline by it. I must use him
In some strange fashion, now, to make him admire me.—

Enter ANANIAS

Where is my drudge? (Aloud.

Re-enter FACE

Face.—Sir!

Sub.—Take away the recipient,
And rectify your menstrue from the phlegma.
Then pour it on the Sol, in the cucurbite,
And let them macerate together.
Face.—Yes, sir.
And save the ground?
Sub.—No: *terra damnata*
Must not have entrance in the work.—Who are you?
Ana.—A faithful brother, if it please you.
Sub.—What's that?
A Lullianist? a Ripley? *Filius artis?*
Can you sublime and dulcify? calcine?
Know you the sapor pontic? sapor stiptic?
Or what is homogene, or heterogene?
Ana.—I understand no heathen language, truly.
Sub.—Heathen! you Knipper-doling? is Ars sacre,
Or chrysopœia, or spagyrica,
Or the pamphysic, or panarchic knowledge,
A heathen language?
Ana.—Heathen Greek, I take it.
Sub.—How! heathen Greek?
Ana.—All's heathen but the Hebrew.
Sub.—Sirrah, my varlet, stand you forth and speak to him,
Like a philosopher: answer in the language.
Name the vexations, and the martyrisations
Of metals in the work.
Face.—Sir, putrefaction,
Solution, ablution, sublimation,
Cohobation, calcination, ceration, and
Fixation.
Sub.—This is heathen Greek to you, now!—
And when comes vivification?
Face.—After mortification.
Sub.—What's cohobation?
Face.—'Tis the pouring on
Your *aqua regis*, and then drawing him off,
To the trine circle of the seven spheres.
Sub.—What's the proper passion of metals?
Face.—Malleation.
Sub.—What's your *ultimum supplicium auri?*
Face.—Antimonium.
Sub.—This is heathen Greek to you!—And what's your mercury?
Face.—A very fugitive, he will be gone, sir.
Sub.—How know you him?
Face.—By his viscosity,

His eleosity, and his suscitability.
Sub.—How do you sublime him?
Face.—With the calce of egg-shells,
White marble, talc.
Sub.—Your magisterium, now,
What's that?
Face.—Shifting, sir, your elements,
Dry into cold, cold into moist, moist into hot,
Hot into dry.
Sub.—This is heathen Greek to you still!
Your *lapis philosophicus?*
Face.—'Tis a stone,
And not a stone; a spirit, a soul and a body:
Which if you do dissolve, it is dissolved;
If you coagulate, it is coagulated;
If you make it to fly, it flieth.
Sub.—Enough. (Exit Face.
This is heathen Greek to you! What are you, sir?
Ana.—Please you, a servant of the exiled brethren,
That deal with widows' and with orphans' goods;
And make a just account unto the saints:
A deacon.
Sub.—O, you are sent from master Wholesome,
Your teacher?
Ana.—From Tribulation Wholesome,
Our very zealous pastor.
Sub.—Good! I have
Some orphans' goods to come here.
Ana.—Of what kind, sir?
Sub.—Pewter and brass, andirons and kitchen-ware,
Metals, that we must use our medicine on:
Wherein the brethren may have a pennyworth,
For ready money.
Ana.—Were the orphans' parents
Sincere professors?
Sub.—Why do you ask?
Ana.—Because
We then are to deal justly, and give, in truth,
Their utmost value.
Sub.—'Slid, you'd cozen else,
And if their parents were not of the faithful!—
I will not trust you, now I think on it,
'Till I have talk'd with your pastor. Have you brought money
To buy more coals?

Ana.—No, surely.
Sub.—No! how so?
Ana.—The brethren bid me say unto you, sir,
Surely, they will not venture any more,
Till they may see projection.
Sub.—How!
Ana.—You have had,
For the instruments, as bricks, and lome, and glasses,
Already thirty pound; and for materials,
They say, some ninety more: and they have heard since,
That one at Heidelberg, made it of an egg,
And a small paper of pin-dust.
Sub.—What's your name?
Ana.—My name is Ananias.
Sub.—Out, the varlet
That cozen'd the apostles! Hence, away!
Flee, mischief! had your holy consistory
No name to send me, of another sound,
Than wicked Ananias? send your elders
Hither to make atonement for you quickly,
And give me satisfaction; or out goes
The fire; and down th' alembics, and the furnace,
Piger Henricus, or what not. Thou wretch!
Both sericon and bufo shall be lost,
Tell them. All hope of rooting out the bishops,
Or the antichristian hierarchy, shall perish,
If they stay threescore minutes: the aquiety,
Terreity, and sulphureity
Shall run together again, and all be annull'd,
Thou wicked Ananias! (Exit Ananias.) This will fetch 'em,
And make them haste towards their gulling more.
A man must deal like a rough nurse, and fright
Those that are froward, to an appetite.

Re-enter FACE *in his uniform, followed by* DRUGGER

Face.—He is busy with his spirits, but we'll upon him.
Sub.—How now! what mates, what Baiards have we here?
Face.—I told you, he would be furious.—Sir, here's Nab,
Has brought you another piece of gold to look on:
—We must appease him. Give it me,—and prays you,
You would devise—what is it, Nab?
Drug.—A sign, sir.
Face.—Ay, a good lucky one, a thriving sign, doctor.
Sub.—I was devising now.

Face.—'Slight, do not say so,
He will repent he gave you any more—
What say you to his constellation, doctor,
The Balance?
Sub.—No, that way is stale, and common.
A townsman born in Taurus, gives the bull,
Or the bull's-head: in Aries, the ram,
A poor device! No, I will have his name
Form'd in some mystic character; whose radii,
Striking the senses of the passers by,
Shall, by a virtual influence, breed affections,
That may result upon the party owns it:
As thus—
Face.—Nab!
Sub.—He shall have *a bel,* that's *Abel;*
And by it standing one whose name is *Dee,*
In a *rug* gown, there's *D,* and *Rug,* that's *drug*:
And right anenst him a dog snarling *er;*
There's *Drugger,* Abel Drugger. That's his sign.
And here's now mystery and hieroglyphic!
Face.—Abel, thou art made.
Drug.—Sir, I do thank his worship.
Face.—Six o' thy legs more will not do it, Nab.
He has brought you a pipe of tobacco, doctor.
Drug.—Yes, sir:
I have another thing I would impart—
Face.—Out with it, Nab.
Drug.—Sir, there is lodged, hard by me,
A rich young widow—
Face.—Good! a bona roba?
Drug.—But nineteen, at the most.
Face.—Very good, Abel.
Drug.—Marry, she's not in fashion yet; she wears
A hood, but it stands a cop.
Face.—No matter, Abel.
Drug.—And I do now and then give her a fucus—
Face.—What! dost thou deal, Nab?
Sub.—I did tell you, captain.
Drug.—And physic too, sometime, sir; for which she trusts me
With all her mind. She's come up here on purpose
To learn the fashion.
Face.—Good (his match too!)—On, Nab.
Drug.—And she does strangely long to know her fortune.
Face.—Ods lid, Nab, send her to the doctor, hither.
Drug.—Yes, I have spoke to her of his worship already:

But she's afraid it will be blown abroad,
And hurt her marriage.
Face.—Hurt it! 'tis the way
To heal it, if 'twere hurt; to make it more
Follow'd and sought: Nab, thou shalt tell her this.
She'll be more known, more talk'd of; and your widows
Are ne'er of any price till they be famous;
Their honour is their multitude of suitors:
Send her, it may be thy good fortune. What!
Thou dost not know.
Drug.—No, sir, she'll never marry
Under a knight: her brother has made a vow.
Face.—What! and dost thou despair, my little Nab,
Knowing what the doctor has set down for thee,
And seeing so many of the city dubb'd?
One glass o' thy water, with a madam I know,
Will have it done, Nab: what's her brother, a knight?
Drug.—No, sir, a gentleman newly warm in his land, sir,
Scarce cold in his one and twenty, that does govern
His sister here; and is a man himself
Of some three thousand a year, and is come up
To learn to quarrel, and to live by his wits,
And will go down again, and die in the country.
Face.—How! to quarrel?
Drug.—Yes, sir, to carry quarrels,
As gallants do; to manage them by line.
Face.—'Slid, Nab, the doctor is the only man
In Christendom for him. He has made a table,
With mathematical demonstrations,
Touching the art of quarrels: he will give him
An instrument to quarrel by. Go, bring them both,
Him and his sister. And, for thee, with her
The doctor happ'ly may persuade. Go to:
'Shalt give his worship a new damask suit
Upon the premises.
Sub.—O, good captain!
Face.—He shall;
He is the honestest fellow, doctor.—Stay not,
No offers; bring the damask, and the parties.
Drug.—I'll try my power, sir,
Face.—And thy will too, Nab.
Sub.—'Tis good tobacco, this! what is't an ounce?
Face.—He'll send you a pound, doctor.
Sub.—O no.
Face.—He will do't.

It is the goodest soul!—Abel, about it.
Thou shalt know more anon. Away, be gone.—
(Exit Abel.

A miserable rogue, and lives with cheese,
And has the worms. That was the cause, indeed,
Why he came now: he dealt with me in private,
To get a med'cine for them.

Sub.—And shall, sir. This works.

Face.—A wife, a wife for one of us, my dear Subtle!
We'll e'en draw lots, and he that fails, shall have
The more in goods, the other has in tail.

Sub.—Rather the less: for she may be so light
She may want grains.

Face.—Ay, or be such a burden,
A man would scarce endure her for the whole.

Sub.—Faith, best let's see her first, and then determine.

Face.—Content: but Dol must have no breath on't.

Sub.—Mum.
Away you, to your Surly, yonder, catch him.

Face.—'Pray God I have not staid too long.

Sub.—I fear it. (Exeunt.

ACT III

SCENE I.—The *Lane before* Lovewit's *House*

Enter TRIBULATION WHOLESOME *and* ANANIAS

Tri.—These chastisements are common to the saints,
And such rebukes, we of the separation
Must bear with willing shoulders, as the trials
Sent forth to tempt our frailties.

Ana.—In pure zeal,
I do not like the man, he is a heathen,
And speaks the language of Canaan, truly.

Tri.—I think him a profane person indeed.

Ana.—He bears
The visible mark of the beast in his forehead.
And for his stone, it is a work of darkness,
And with philosophy blinds the eyes of man.

Tri.—Good brother, we must bend unto all means
That may give furtherance to the holy cause.

Ana.—Which his cannot: the sanctified cause
Should have a sanctified course.

Tri.—Not always necessary:
The children of perdition are oft-times

Made instruments even of the greatest works:
Beside, we should give somewhat to man's nature,
The place he lives in, still about the fire,
And fume of metals, that intoxicate
The brain of man, and make him prone to passion.
Where have you greater atheists than your cooks?
Or more profane, or choleric, than your glass-men?
More antichristian than your bell-founders?
What makes the devil so devilish, I would ask you,
Satan, our common enemy, but his being
Perpetually about the fire, and boiling
Brimstone and arsenic? We must give, I say,
Unto the motives, and the stirrers up
Of humours in the blood. It may be so,
When as the work is done, the stone is made,
This heat of his may turn into a zeal,
And stand up for the beauteous discipline,
Against the menstruous cloth and rag of Rome.
We must await his calling, and the coming
Of the good spirit. You did fault, t' upbraid him
With the brethren's blessing of Heidelberg, weighing
What need we have to hasten on the work,
For the restoring of the silenced saints,
Which ne'er will be, but the philosopher's stone.
And so a learned elder, one of Scotland,
Assured me; *aurum potabile* being
The only med'cine, for the civil magistrate,
T' incline him to a feeling of the cause;
And must be daily used in the disease.

Ana.—I have not edified more, truly, by man;
Not since the beautiful light first shone on me:
And I am sad my zeal hath so offended.

Tri.—Let us call on him then.

Ana.—The motion's good,
And of the spirit; I will knock first. (Knocks.) Peace be within!

(The door is opened, and they enter.

SCENE II.—*A Room in* LOVEWIT'S *House*

Enter SUBTLE, *followed by* TRIBULATION *and* ANANIAS

Sub.—O, are you come? 'twas time. Your threescore minutes
Were at last thread, you see: and down had gone
Furnus acediæ, turris circulatorius:
Lembec, bolt's-head, retort and pelican

Had all been cinders.—Wicked Ananias!
Art thou return'd? nay then, it goes down yet.
Tri.—Sir, be appeased; he is come to humble
Himself in spirit, and to ask your patience,
If too much zeal hath carried him aside
From the due path.
Sub.—Why, this doth qualify!
Tri.—The brethren had no purpose, verily,
To give you the least grievance: but are ready
To lend their willing hands to any project
The spirit and you direct.
Sub.—This qualifies more!
Tri.—And for the orphan's goods, let them be valued,
Or what is needful else to the holy work,
It shall be numbered; here, by me, the saints,
Throw down their purse before you.
Sub.—This qualifies most!
Why, thus it should be, now you understand.
Have I discours'd so unto you of our stone,
And of the good that it shall bring your cause?
Shew'd you (beside the main of hiring forces
Abroad, drawing the Hollanders, your friends,
From the Indies, to serve you, with all their fleet)
That even the med'cinal use shall make you a faction,
And party in the realm? As, put the case,
That some great man in state, he have the gout,
Why, you but send three drops of your elixir,
You help him straight: there you have made a friend.
Another has the palsy or the dropsy,
He takes of your incombustible stuff,
He's young again: there you have made a friend,
A lady that is past the feat of body,
Though not of mind, and hath her face decay'd
Beyond all cure of paintings, you restore,
With the oil of talc: there you have made a friend;
And all her friends. A lord that is a leper,
A knight that has the bone-ache, or a squire
That hath both these, you make them smooth and sound,
With a bare fricace of your med'cine: still
You increase your friends.
Tri.—Ay, it is very pregnant.
Sub.—And then the turning of this lawyer's pewter
To plate at Christmas.—
Ana.—Christ-tide, I pray you.
Sub.—Yet, Ananias!

Ana.—I have done.
Sub.—Or changing
His parcel gilt to massy gold. You cannot
But raise you friends. Withal, to be of power
To pay an army in the field, to buy
The king of France out of his realms, or Spain
Out of his Indies. What can you not do
Against lords spiritual or temporal,
That shall oppone you?
Tri.—Verily, 'tis true.
We may be temporal lords ourselves, I take it.
Sub.—You may be anything, and leave off to make
Long-winded exercises; or suck up
Your *ha!* and *hum!* in a tune. I not deny,
But such as are not graced in a state,
May, for their ends, be adverse in religion,
And get a tune to call the flock together:
For, to say sooth, a tune does much with women,
And other phlegmatic people; it is your bell.
Ana.—Bells are profane; a tune may be religious.
Sub.—No warning with you! then farewell my patience.
'Slight, it shall down: I will not be thus tortured.
Tri.—I pray you, sir.
Sub.—All shall perish. I have spoken it.
Tri.—Let me find grace, sir, in your eyes; the man
He stands corrected: neither did his zeal,
But as your self, allow a tune somewhere.
Which now, being tow'rd the stone, we shall not need.
Sub.—No, nor your holy vizard, to win widows
To give you legacies; or make zealous wives
To rob their husbands for the common cause:
Nor take the start of bonds broke but one day,
And say, they were forfeited by providence.
Nor shall you need o'er night to eat huge meals,
To celebrate your next day's fast the better;
The whilst the brethren and the sisters humbled,
Abate the stiffness of the flesh. Nor cast
Before your hungry hearers scrupulous bones;
As whether a Christian may hawk or hunt,
Or whether matrons of the holy assembly
May lay their hair out, or wear doublets,
Or have that idol starch about their linen.
Ana.—It is indeed an idol.
Tri.—Mind him not, sir.
I do command thee, spirit of zeal, but trouble,

To peace within him! Pray, you, sir, go on.
Sub.—Nor shall you need to libel 'gainst the prelates,
And shorten so your ears against the hearing
Of the next wire-drawn grace. Nor of necessity
Rail against plays, to please the alderman
Whose daily custard you devour: nor lie
With zealous rage till you are hoarse. Not one
Of these so singular arts. Nor call your selves
By names of Tribulation, Persecution,
Restraint, Long-patience, and such-like, affected
By the whole family or wood of you,
Only for glory, and to catch the ear
Of the disciple.
Tri.—Truly, sir, they are
Ways that the godly brethren have invented,
For propagation of the glorious cause,
As very notable means, and whereby also
Themselves grow soon, and profitably, famous.
Sub.—O, but the stone, all's idle to it! nothing!
The art of angels' nature's miracle,
The divine secret that doth fly in clouds
From east to west; and whose tradition
Is not from men, but spirits.
Ana.—I hate traditions;
I do not trust them.—
Tri.—Peace!
Ana.—They are popish all.
I will not peace: I will not—
Tri.—Ananias!
Ana.—Please the profane, to grieve the godly; I may not.
Sub.—Well, Ananias, thou shalt overcome.
Tri.—It is an ignorant zeal that haunts him, sir;
But truly, else, a very faithful brother,
A botcher, and a man, by revelation,
That hath a competent knowledge of the truth.
Sub.—Has he a competent sum there in the bag
To buy the goods within? I am made guardian,
And must, for charity, and conscience sake,
Now see the most be made for my poor orphan;
Though I desire the brethren too good gainers:
There they are within. When you have view'd, and bought 'em,
And ta'en the inventory of what they are,
They are ready for projection; there's no more
To do: cast on the med'cine, so much silver

As there is tin there, so much gold as brass,
I'll give't you in by weight.
Tri.—But how long time,
Sir, must the saints expect yet?
Sub.—Let me see,
How's the moon now? Eight, nine, ten days hence,
He will be silver potate; then three days
Before he citronise: Some fifteen days,
The magisterium will be perfected.
Ana.—About the second day of the third week,
In the ninth month?
Sub.—Yes, my good Ananias.
Tri.—What will the orphan's goods arise to, think you?
Sub.—Some hundred marks, as much as fill'd three cars,
Unladed now: you'll make six millions of them.—
But I must have more coals laid in.
Tri.—How!
Sub.—Another load,
And then we have finish'd. We must now increase
Our fire to *ignis ardens*, we are past
Fimus equinus, balnei, cineris,
And all those lenter heats. If the holy purse
Should with this draught fall low, and that the saints
Do need a present sum, I have a trick
To melt the pewter, you shall buy now, instantly,
And with a tincture make you as good Dutch dollars
As any are in Holland.
Tri.—Can you so?
Sub.—Ay, and shall 'bide the third examination.
Ana.—It will be joyful tidings to the brethren.
Sub.—But you must carry it secret.
Tri.—Ay; but stay,
This act of coining, is it lawful?
Ana.—Lawful!
We know no magistrate; or, if we did,
This is foreign coin.
Sub.—It is no coining, sir.
It is but casting.
Tri.—Ha! you distinguish well:
Casting of money may be lawful.
Ana.—'Tis, sir.
Tri.—Truly, I take it so.
Sub.—There is no scruple,
Sir, to be made of it; believe Ananias:
This case of conscience he is studied in.

Tri.—I'll make a question of it to the brethren.
Ana.—The brethren shall approve it lawful, doubt not.
Where shall it be done? (Knocking without.
Sub.—For that we'll talk anon.
There's some to speak with me. Go in, I pray you,
And view the parcels. That's the inventory.
I'll come to you straight. (Exeunt Trib. and Ana.) Who is it?—Face! appear.

Enter FACE, *in his uniform*

How now! good prize?
Face.—Good pox! yond' costive cheater
Never came on.
Sub.—How then?
Face.—I have walk'd the round
Till now, and no such thing.
Sub.—And have you quit him?
Face.—Quit him! an hell would quit him too, he were happy.
'Slight! would you have me stalk like a mill-jade,
All day, for one that will not yield us grains?
I know him of old.
Sub.—O, but to have gull'd him,
Had been a mastery.
Face.—Let him go, black boy!
And turn thee, that some fresh news may possess thee.
A noble count, a don of Spain, my dear
Delicious compeer, and my party-bawd,
Who is come hither private for his conscience,
And brought munition with him, six great slops,
Bigger than three Dutch hoys, beside round trunks,
Furnished with pistolets, and pieces of eight,
Will straight be here, my rogue, to have thy bath,
(That is the colour,) and to make his battery
Upon our Dol, our castle, our cinque-port,
Our Dover pier, our what thou wilt. Where is she?
She must prepare perfumes, delicate linen,
The bath in chief, a banquet, and her wit,
For she must milk his epididimis.
Where is the doxy?
Sub.—I'll send her to thee:
And but dispatch my brace of little John Leydens,
And come again my self.
Face.—Are they within then?
Sub.—Numbering the sum.
Face.—How much?

Sub.—A hundred marks, boy. (Exit.
Face.—Why, this is a lucky day. Ten pounds of Mammon!
Three of my clerk! a portague of my grocer!
This of the brethren! beside reversions,
And states to come in the widow, and my count!
My share to-day will not be bought for forty—

Enter Dol

Dol.—What?
Face.—Pounds, dainty Dorothy! art thou so near?
Dol.—Yes; say, lord general, how fares our camp?
Face.—As with the few that had entrench'd themselves
Safe, by their discipline, against a world, Dol,
And laugh'd within those trenches, and grew fat
With thinking on the booties, Dol, brought in
Daily by their small parties. This dear hour,
A doughty don is taken with my Dol;
And thou mayst make his ransom what thou wilt,
My Dousabel; he shall be brought here fetter'd
With thy fair looks, before he sees thee; and thrown
In a down-bed, as dark as any dungeon;
Where thou shalt keep him waking with thy drum;
Thy drum, my Dol, thy drum; till he be tame
As the poor black-birds were in the great frost,
Or bees are with a bason; and so hive him
In the swan-skin coverlid, and cambric sheets,
Till he work honey and wax, my little God's gift.
Dol.—What is he, general?
Face.—An adalantado,
A grandee, girl. Was not my Dapper here yet?
Dol.—No.
Face.—Nor my Drugger?
Dol.—Neither.
Face.—A pox on 'em,
They are so long a furnishing! such stinkards
Would not be seen upon these festival days.—

Re-enter Subtle

How now! have you done?
Sub.—Done. They are gone: the sum
Is here in bank, my Face. I would we knew
Another chapman now would buy 'em outright.
Face.—'Slid, Nab shall do't against he have the widow,
To furnish household.
Sub.—Excellent, well thought on:

Pray God he come!
Face.—I pray he keep away
Till our new business be o'erpast.
Sub.—But, Face,
How cam'st thou by this secret don?
Face.—A spirit
Brought me th' intelligence in a paper here,
As I was conjuring yonder in my circle
For Surly; I have my flies abroad. Your bath
Is famous, Subtle, by my means. Sweet Dol,
You must go tune your virginal, no losing
O' the least time: and, do you hear? good action.
Firk, like a flounder; kiss, like a scallop, close;
And tickle him with thy mother-tongue. His great
Verdugoship has not a jot of language;
So much the easier to be cozen'd, my Dolly.
He will come here in a hired coach, obscure,
And our own coachman, whom I have sent as guide,
No creature else. (Knocking without.) Who's that?
(Exit Dol.

Sub.—It is not he?
Face.—O no, not yet this hour.

Re-enter Dol

Sub.—Who is't?
Dol.—Dapper,
Your clerk.
Face.—God's will then, queen of Fairy,
On with your tire; (Exit Dol.) and, doctor, with your robes.
Let's dispatch him for God's sake.
Sub.—'Twill be long.
Face.—I warrant you, take but the cues I give you,
It shall be brief enough. (Goes to the window.) 'Slight, here are more!
Abel, and I think the angry boy, the heir,
That fain would quarrel.
Sub.—And the widow?
Face.—No,
Not that I see. Away! (Exit Sub.

Enter Dapper

—O sir, you are welcome.
The doctor is within a moving for you;

I have had the most ado to win him to it!—
He swears you'll be the darling of the dice:
He never heard her highness dote till now.
Your aunt has given you the most gracious words
That can be thought on.

Dap.—Shall I see her grace?

Face.—See her, and kiss her too.—

Enter ABEL, *followed by* KASTRIL

What, honest Nab!
Hast brought the damask?

Drug.—No, sir; here's tobacco.

Face.—'Tis well done, Nab: thou'lt bring the damask too?

Drug.—Yes: here's the gentleman, captain, master Kastril,
I have brought to see the doctor.

Face.—Where's the widow?

Drug.—Sir, as he likes, his sister, he says, shall come.

Face.—O, is it so? good time. Is your name Kastril, sir?

Kas.—Ay, and the best of the Kastrils, I'd be sorry else,
By fifteen hundred a year. Where is the doctor?
My mad tobacco-boy, here, tells me of one
That can do things: has he any skill?

Face.—Wherein, sir?

Kas.—To carry a business, manage a quarrel fairly,
Upon fit terms.

Face.—It seems, sir, you are but young
About the town, that can make that a question.

Kas.—Sir, not so young, but I have heard some speech
Of the angry boys, and seen them take tobacco;
And in his shop; and I can take it too.
And I would fain be one of 'em, and go down
And practise in the country.

Face.—Sir, for the duello,
The doctor, I assure you, shall inform you,
To the least shadow of a hair; and shew you
An instrument he has of his own making,
Wherewith no sooner shall you make report
Of any quarrel, but he will take the height on't
Most instantly, and tell in what degree
Of safety it lies in, or mortality.
And how it may be borne, whether in a right line,
Or a half circle; or may else be cast
Into an angle blunt, if not acute:
All this he will demonstrate. And then, rules
To give and take the lie by.

Kas.—How! to take it?
Face.—Yes, in oblique he'll shew you, or in circle;
But never in diameter. The whole town
Study his theorems, and dispute them ordinarily
at the eating academies.
Kas.—But does he teach
Living by the wits too?
Face.—Anything whatever.
You cannot think that subtlety, but he reads it.
He made me a captain. I was a stark pimp,
Just of your standing, 'fore I met with him;
It is not two months since. I'll tell you his method:
First, he will enter you at some ordinary.
Kas.—No, I'll not come there: you shall pardon me.
Face.—For why, sir?
Kas.—There's gaming there, and tricks.
Face.—Why, would you be
A gallant, and not game?
Kas.—Ay, 'twill spend a man.
Face.—Spend you! it will repair you when you are spent:
How do they live by their wits there, that have vented
Six times your fortunes?
Kas.—What, three thousand a-year!
Face.—Ay, forty thousand.
Kas.—Are there such?
Face.—Ay, sir,
And gallants yet. Here's a young gentleman
Is born to nothing,—(Points to Dapper.) forty marks
a-year,
Which I count nothing:—he is to be initiated,
And have a fly of the doctor. He will win you,
By unresistible luck, within this fortnight,
Enough to buy a barony. They will set him
Upmost, at the groom porters, all the Christmas:
And for the whole year through, at every place,
Where there is play, present him with the chair;
The best attendance, the best drink; sometimes
Two glasses of Canary, and pay nothing;
The purest linen, and the sharpest knife,
The partridge next his trencher: and somewhere
The dainty bed, in private, with the dainty.
You shall have your ordinaries bid for him,
As play-houses for a poet; and the master
Pray him aloud to name what dish he affects,

Which must be butter'd shrimps: and those that drink
To no mouth else, will drink to his, as being
The goodly president mouth of all the board.

Kas.—Do you not gull one?

Face.—'Ods my life! do you think it?
You shall have a cast commander, (can but get
In credit with a glover, or a spurrier,
For some two pair of either's ware aforehand,)
Will, by most swift posts, dealing (but) with him,
Arrive at competent means to keep himself,
His punk and naked boy, in excellent fashion,
And be admired for't.

Kas.—Will the doctor teach this?

Face.—He will do more, sir: when your land is gone,
As men of spirit hate to keep earth long,
In a vacation, when small money is stirring,
And ordinaries suspended till the term,
He'll shew a perspective, where on one side
You shall behold the faces and the persons
Of all sufficient young heirs in town,
Whose bonds are current for commodity;
On th' other side, the merchants' forms, and others,
That without help of any second broker,
Who would expect a share, will trust such parcels:
In the third square, the very street and sign
Where the commodity dwells, and does but wait
To be deliver'd, be it pepper, soap,
Hops, or tobacco, oatmeal, woad, or cheeses.
All which you may so handle, to enjoy
To your own use, and never stand obliged.

Kas.—I'faith! is he such a fellow?

Face.—Why, Nab here knows him.
And then for making matches for rich widows,
Young gentlewomen, heirs, the fortunat'st man!
He's sent to, far and near, all over England,
To have his counsel, and to know their fortunes.

Kas.—God's will, my suster shall see him.

Face.—I'll tell you, sir,
What he did tell me of Nab. It's a strange thing:—
By the way, you must eat no cheese, Nab, it breeds melancholy,
And that same melancholy breeds worms; but pass it:—
He told me, honest Nab here was ne'er at tavern
But once in's life!

Drug.—Truth, and no more I was not.

Face.—And then he was so sick—
Drug.—Could he tell you that too?
Face.—How should I know it?
Drug.—In troth we had been a shooting,
And had a piece of fat ram-mutton to supper,
That lay so heavy o' my stomach—
Face.—And he has no head
To bear any wine; for what with the noise of the fidlers,
And care of his shop, for he dares keep no servants—
Drug.—My head did so ach—
Face.—And he was fain to be brought home,
The doctor told me: and then a good old woman—
Drug.—Yes, faith, she dwells in Sea-coal-lane,—did cure me,
With sodden ale, and pellitory of the wall;
Cost me but two-pence. I had another sickness
Was worse than that.
Face.—Ay, that was with the grief
Thou took'st for being cess'd at eighteen-pence,
For the water-work.
Drug.—In truth, and it was like
T' have cost me almost my life.
Face.—Thy hair went off?
Drug.—Yes, sir; 'twas done for spight.
Face.—Nay, so says the doctor.
Kas.—Pray thee, tobacco-boy, go fetch my suster;
I'll see this learned boy before I go;
And so shall she.
Face.—Sir, he is busy now:
But if you have a sister to fetch hither,
Perhaps your own pains may command her sooner;
And he by that time will be free.
Kas.—I go. (Exit.
Face.—Drugger, she's thine: the damask!—(Exit Abel.
Subtle and I
Must wrestle for her. (Aside.)—Come on, master Dapper,
You see how I turn clients here away,
To give your cause dispatch; have you perform'd
The ceremonies were enjoin'd you?
Dap.—Yes, of the vinegar,
And the clean shirt.
Face.—'Tis well: that shirt may do you
More worship than you think. Your aunt's a-fire,
But that she will not shew it, t' have a sight of you.
Have you provided for her grace's servants?
Dap.—Yes, here are six score Edward shillings.

Face.—Good!
Dap.—And an old Harry's sovereign.
Face.—Very good!
Dap—And three James shillings, and an Elizabeth groat,
Just twenty nobles.
Face.—O, you are too just.
I would you had had the other noble in Maries.
Dap.—I have some Philip and Maries.
Face.—Ay, those same
Are best of all: where are they? Hark, the doctor.

Enter SUBTLE, *disguised like a priest of Fairy, with a stripe of cloth*

Sub. (in a feigned voice.)—Is yet her grace's cousin come?
Face.—He is come.
Sub.— And is he fasting?
Face.—Yes.
Sub.—And hath cried hum?
Face.—Thrice, you must answer.
Dap.—Thrice.
Sub.—And as oft buz?
Face.—If you have, say.
Dap.—I have.
Sub.—Then, to her cuz,
Hoping that he hath vinegar'd his senses,
As he was bid, the Fairy queen dispenses,
By me, this robe, the petticoat of fortune;
Which that he straight put on, she doth importune.
And though to fortune near be her petticoat,
Yet nearer is her smock, the queen doth note:
And therefore, ev'n of that a piece she hath sent
Which, being a child, to wrap him in was rent;
And prays him for a scarf he now will wear it,
With as much love as then her grace did tear it,
About his eyes, (They blind him with the rag,) to shew he is fortunate.
And, trusting unto her to make his state,
He'll throw away all worldly pelf about him;
Which that he will perform, she doth not doubt him.
Face.—She need not doubt him, sir. Alas, he has nothing,
But what he will part withal as willingly,
Upon her grace's word—throw away your purse—
As she would ask it;—handkerchiefs and all—
(He throws away, as they bid him.
She cannot bid that thing, but he'll obey.—

If you have a ring about you, cast it off,
Or a silver seal at your wrist; her grace will send
Her fairies here to search you, therefore deal
Directly with her highness: if they find
That you conceal a mite, you are undone.

Dap.—Truly, there's all.

Face.—All what?

Dap.—My money; truly.

Face.—Keep nothing that is transitory about you.
Bid Dol play music. (Aside to Subtle.)—Look, the elves
are come (Dol plays on the cittern within.
To pinch you, if you tell not truth. Advise you.
(They pinch him.

Dap.—O! I have a paper with a spur-ryal in't.

Face.—Ti, ti.
They knew't, they say.

Sub.—Ti, ti, ti, ti. He has more yet.

Face.—Ti, ti-ti-ti. In the other pocket. (Aside to Sub.

Sub.—Titi, titi, titi, titi, titi.
They must pinch him or he will never confess, they say.
(They pinch him again.

Dap.—O, O!

Face.—Nay, pray you hold: he is her grace's nephew.
Ti, ti, ti? What care you? good faith, you shall care.—
Deal plainly, sir, and shame the fairier. Shew
You are innocent.

Dap.—By this good light, I have nothing.

Sub.—Ti, ti, ti, ti, to, ta. He does equivocate, she says:
Ti, ti do ti, ti ti do, ti da; and swears by the light when he
is blinded.

Dap.—By this good dark, I have nothing but a half-crown
Of gold about my wrist, that my love gave me;
And a leaden heart I wore since she forsook me.

Face.—I thought 'twas something. And would you incur
Your aunt's displeasure for these trifles? Come,
I had rather you had thrown away twenty half-crowns.
(Takes it off.
You may wear your leaden heart still. —

Enter DOL, *hastily*

How now!

Sub.—What news, Dol?

Dol.—Yonder's your knight, sir Mammon.

Face.—'Ods lid, we never thought of him till now!
Where is he?

Dol.—Here hard by: he is at the door.
Sub.—And you are not ready, now! Dol, get his suit. (Exit Dol.
He must not be sent back.
Face.—O by no means.
What shall we do with this same puffin here,
Now he's on the spit?
Sub.—Why, lay him back awhile,
With some device.

Re-enter Dol, *with* Face's *clothes*

—Ti, ti, ti, ti, ti, ti, Would her grace speak with me?
I come.—Help, Dol! (Knocking without.
Face. (speaks through the key-hole.)—Who's there? sir Epicure,
My master's in the way. Please you to walk
Three or four turns, but till his back be turn'd,
And I am for you.—Quickly, Dol!
Sub.—Her grace
Commends her kindly to you, master Dapper.
Dap.—I long to see her grace.
Sub.—She now is set
At dinner in her bed, and she has sent you
From her own private trencher, a dead mouse,
And a piece of gingerbread, to be merry withal,
And stay your stomach, lest you faint with fasting;
Yet if you could hold out till she saw you, she says,
It would be better for you.
Face.—Sir, he shall
Hold out, an 'twere this two hours, for her highness;
I can assure you that. We will not lose
All we have done.—
Sub.—He must not see, nor speak
To any body, till then.
Face.—For that we'll put, sir,
A stay in's mouth.
Sub.—Of what?
Face.—Of gingerbread.
Make you it fit. He that hath pleas'd her grace
Thus far, shall not now crincle for a little.—
Gape, sir, and let him fit you.
(They thrust a gag of gingerbread in his mouth.
Sub.—Where shall we now
Bestow him?
Dol.—In the privy.

Sub.—Come along, sir,
I now must shew you Fortune's privy lodgings.
Face.—Are they perfum'd, and his bath ready?
Sub.—All:
Only the fumigation's somewhat strong.
Face. (speaking through the key-hole.)—Sir Epicure, I am yours, sir, by and by. (Exeunt with Dapper.

ACT IV

SCENE I.—*A Room in* Lovewit's *House*

Enter Face *and* Mammon

Face.—O sir, you are come in the only finest time.—
Mam.—Where's master?
Face.—Now preparing for projection, sir.
Your stuff will be all changed shortly.
Mam.—Into gold?
Face.—To gold and silver, sir.
Mam.—Silver I care not for.
Face.—Yes, sir, a little to give beggars.
Mam.—Where's the lady?
Face.—At hand here. I have told her such brave things of you,
Touching your bounty, and your noble spirit—
Mam.—Hast thou?
Face.—As she is almost in her fit to see you.
But, good sir, no divinity in your conference,
For fear of putting her in rage.—
Mam.—I warrant thee.
Face.—Six men (sir) will not hold her down: and then,
If the old man should hear or see you—
Mam.—Fear not.
Face.—The very house, sir, would run mad. You know it,
How scrupulous he is, and violent,
'Gainst the least act of sin. Physic, or mathematics,
Poetry, state, or bawdry, as I told you,
She will endure, and never startle; but
No word of controversy.
Mam.—I am school'd, good Ulen.
Face.—And you must praise her house, remember that,
And her nobility.
Mam.—Let me alone:
No herald, no, nor antiquary, Lungs,
Shall do it better. Go.

Face.—Why, this is yet
A kind of modern happiness, to have
Dol Common for a great lady. (Aside and exit.
Mam.—Now, Epicure,
Heighten thyself, talk to her all in gold;
Rain her as many showers as Jove did drops
Unto his Danäe; shew the god a miser,
Compared with Mammon. What! the stone will do't.
She shall feel gold, taste gold, hear gold, sleep gold;
Nay, we will *concumbere* gold: I will be puissant,
And mighty in my talk to her.—

Re-enter FACE, *with* DOL *richly dressed*

Here she comes.
Face.—To him, Dol, suckle him. This is the noble knight,
I told your ladyship—
Mam.—Madam, with your pardon,
I kiss your vesture.
Dol.—Sir, I were uncivil
If I would suffer that; my lip to you, sir.
Mam.—I hope my lord your brother be in health, lady.
Dol.—My lord, my brother is, though I no lady, sir.
Face.—Well said, my Guinea bird. (Aside.
Mam.—Right noble madam—
Face.—O, we shall have most fierce idolatry. (Aside.
Mam.—'Tis your prerogative.
Dol.—Rather your courtesy.
Mam.—Were there nought else to enlarge your virtues to me,
These answers speak your breeding and your blood.
Dol.—Blood we boast none, sir, a poor baron's daughter.
Mam.—Poor! and gat you? profane not. Had your father
Slept all the happy remnant of his life
After that act, lien but there still, and panted,
He had done enough to make himself, his issue,
And his posterity noble.
Dol.—Sir, although
We may be said to want the gilt and trappings,
The dress of honour, yet we strive to keep
The seeds and the materials.
Mam.—I do see
The old ingredient, virtue, was not lost,
Nor the drug money used to make your compound.
There is a strange nobility in your eye,
This lip, that chin! methinks you do resemble
One of the Austriac princes.

Face.—Very like!
Her father was an Irish costarmonger. (Aside.
Mam.—The house of Valois just had such a nose,
And such a forehead yet the Medici
Of Florence boast.
Dol.—Troth, and I have been liken'd
To all these princes.
Face.—I'll be sworn, I heard it.
Mam.—I know not how! it is not any one,
But e'en the very choice of all their features.
Face.—I'll in, and laugh. (Aside and exit.
Mam.—A certain touch, or air,
That sparkles a divinity, beyond
An earthly beauty!
Dol.—O, you play the courtier.
Mam.—Good lady, give me leave—
Dol.—In faith, I may not,
To mock me, sir.
Mam.—To burn in this sweet flame;
The phœnix never knew a nobler death.
Dol.—Nay, now you court the courtier, and destroy
What you would build: this art, sir, in your words,
Calls your whole faith in question.
Mam.—By my soul—
Dol.—Nay, oaths are made of the same air, sir.
Mam.—Nature
Never bestow'd upon mortality
A more unblamed, a more harmonious feature;
She play'd the step-dame in all faces else:
Sweet Madam, let me be particular—
Dol.—Particular, sir! I pray you know your distance.
Mam.—In no ill sense, sweet lady; but to ask
How your fair graces pass the hours? I see
You are lodg'd here, in the house of a rare man,
An excellent artist; but what's that to you?
Dol.—Yes, sir; I study here the mathematics,
And distillation.
Mam.—O, I cry your pardon.
He's a divine instructor! can extract
The souls of all things by his art; call all
The virtues, and the miracles of the sun,
Into a temperate furnace; teach dull nature
What her own forces are. A man, the emperor
Has courted above Kelly; sent his medals
And chains, to invite him.

Dol.—Ay, and for his physic, sir—
Mam.—Above the art of Æsculapius,
That drew the envy of the thunderer!
I know all this, and more.
Dol.—Troth, I am taken, sir,
Whole with these studies, that contemplate nature.
Mam.—It is a noble humour; but this form
Was not intended to so dark a use.
Had you been crooked, foul, of some coarse mould
A cloister had done well; but such a feature
That might stand up the glory of a kingdom,
To live recluse! is a mere solœcism,
Though in a nunnery. It must not be.
I muse, my lord, your brother will permit it:
You should spend half my land first, were I he.
Does not this diamond better on my finger,
Than in the quarry?
Dol.—Yes.
Mam.—Why, you are like it.
You were created, lady, for the light.
Here, you shall wear it; take it, the first pledge
Of what I speak, to bind you to believe me.
Dol.—In chains of adamant?
Mam.—Yes, the strongest bands.
And take a secret too—here, by your side,
Doth stand this hour, the happiest man in Europe.
Dol.—You are contented, sir!
Mam.—Nay, in true being,
The envy of princes and the fear of states.
Dol.—Say you so, sir Epicure?
Mam.—Yes, and thou shalt prove it,
Daughter of honour. I have cast mine eye
Upon thy form, and I will rear this beauty
Above all styles.
Dol.—You mean no treason, sir?
Mam.—No, I will take away that jealousy.
I am the lord of the philosopher's stone,
And thou the lady.
Dol.—How, sir! have you that?
Mam.—I am the master of the mystery.
This day the good old wretch here o' the house
Has made it for us; now he's at projection.
Think therefore thy first wish now, let me hear it,
And it shall rain into thy lap, no shower,
But floods of gold, whole cataracts, a deluge,

To get a nation on thee.
Dol.—You are pleased, sir,
To work on the ambition of our sex.
Mam.—I am pleased the glory of her sex should know,
This nook, here, of the Friars is no climate
For her to live obscurely in, to learn
Physic and surgery, for the constable's wife
Of some odd hundred in Essex; but come forth,
And taste the air of palaces; eat, drink
The toils of empirics, and their boasted practice;
Tincture of pearl, and coral, gold and amber;
Be seen at feasts and triumphs; have it ask'd,
What miracle she is? set all the eyes
Of court a-fire, like a burning glass,
And work them into cinders, when the jewels
Of twenty states adorn thee, and the light
Strikes out the stars! that when thy name is mention'd.
Queens may look pale; and we but shewing our love,
Nero's Poppæa may be lost in story!
Thus will we have it.
Dol.—I could well consent, sir.
But, in a monarchy, how will this be?
The prince will soon take notice, and both seize
You and your stone, it being a wealth unfit
For any private subject.
Mam.—If he knew it.
Dol.—Yourself do boast it, sir.
Mam.—To thee, my life.
Dol.—O, but beware, sir! you may come to end
The remnants of your days in a loth'd prison,
By speaking of it.
Mam.—'Tis no idle fear:
We'll therefore go withal, my girl, and live
In a free state, where we will eat our mullets,
Soused in high-country wines, sup pheasants' eggs,
And have our cockles boil'd in silver shells;
Our shrimps to swim again, as when they liv'd,
In a rare butter made of dolphin's milk,
Whose cream does look like opals; and with these
Delicate meats set ourselves high for pleasure,
And take us down again, and then renew
Our youth and strength with drinking the elixir,
And so enjoy a perpetuity
Of life and lust! And thou shalt have thy wardrobe
Richer than nature's, still to change thy self,

And vary oftener, for thy pride, than she,
Or art, her wise and almost-equal servant.

Re-enter FACE

Face.—Sir, you art too loud. I hear you every word
Into the laboratory. Some fitter place;
The garden, or great chamber above. How like you her?
Mam.—Excellent! Lungs. There's for thee. (Gives him money.
Face.—But do you hear?
Good sir, beware, no mention of the rabbins.
Mam.—We think not on 'em. (Exeunt Mam. and Dol.
Face.—O, it is well, sir.—Subtle!

Enter SUBTLE

Dost thou not laugh?
Sub.—Yes; are they gone?
Face.—All's clear.
Sub.—The widow is come.
Face.—And your quarrelling disciple?
Sub.—Ay.
Face.—I must to my captainship again then.
Sub.—Stay, bring them in first.
Face.—So I meant. What is she?
A bonnibel?
Sub.—I know not.
Face.—We'll draw lots:
You'll stand to that?
Sub.—What else?
Face.—O, for a suit,
To fall now like a curtain, flap!
Sub.—To the door, man.
Face.—You'll have the first kiss, 'cause I am not ready. (Exit.
Sub.—Yes, and perhaps hit you through both the nostrils.
Face. (within.)—Who would you speak with?
Kas. (within.)—Where's the captain?
Face. (within.)—Gone, sir,
About some business.
Kas. (within.)—Gone!
About some business.
Face. (within.)—He'll return straight.
But master doctor, his lieutenant, is here.

Enter KASTRIL, *followed by* Dame PLIANT

Sub.—Come near, my worshipful boy, my *terræ fili*,
That is, my boy of land; make thy approaches:

Welcome? I know thy lusts, and thy desires,
And I will serve and satisfy them. Begin,
Charge me from thence, or thence, or in this line;
Here is my centre: ground thy quarrel.

Kas.—You lie.

Sub.—How, child of wrath and anger! the loud lie?
For what, my sudden boy?

Kas.—Nay, that look you to,
I am afore-hand.

Sub.—O, this is no true grammar,
And as ill logic! You must render causes, child,
Your first and second intentions, know your canons
And your divisions, moods, degrees, and differences,
Your predicaments, substance, and accident,
Series, extern and intern, with their causes,
Efficient, material, formal, final,
And have your elements perfect.

Kas.—What is this!
The angry tongue he talks in? (Aside.

Sub.—That false precept,
Of being afore-hand, has deceived a number,
And made them enter quarrels, often-times,
Before they were aware; and afterwards,
Against their wills.

Kas.—How must I do then, sir?

Sub.—I cry this lady mercy: she should first
Have been saluted. (Kisses her.) I do call you lady,
Because you are to be one, ere't be long,
My soft and buxom widow.

Kas.—Is she, i'faith?

Sub.—Yes, or my art is an egregious liar.

Kas.—How know you?

Sub.—By inspection on her forehead,
And subtlety of her lip, which must be tasted
Often, to make a judgment. (Kisses her again.) 'Slight, she melts
Like a myrobolane:—here is yet a line,
In *rivo frontis*, tells me he is no knight.

Dame P.—What is he then, sir?

Sub.—Let me see your hand.
O, your *linea fortunæ* makes it plain;
And stella here *in monte Veneris*.
But, most of all, *junctura annularis*.
He is a soldier, or a man of art, lady,
But shall have some great honour shortly.

Dame P.—Brother,
He's a rare man, believe me!

Re-enter FACE, *in his uniform*

Kas.—Hold your peace.
Here comes the t'other rare man.—'Save you, captain
Face.—Good master Kastril! Is this your sister?
Kas.—Ay, sir.
Please you to kiss her, and be proud to know her.
Face.—I shall be proud to know you, lady. (Kisses her.
Dame P.—Brother,
He calls me lady too.
Kas.—Ay, peace: I heard it. (Takes her aside.
Face.—The count is come.
Sub.—Where is he?
Face.—At the door.
Sub.—Why, you must entertain him.
Face.—What will you do
With these the while?
Sub.—Why, have them up, and shew them
Some fustian book, or the dark glass.
Face.—'Fore God,
She is a delicate dab-chick! I must have her. (Exit.
Sub.—Must you! ay, if your fortune will, you must—
Come, sir, the captain will come to us presently:
I'll have you to my chamber of demonstrations,
Where I will shew you both the grammar, and logic,
And rhetoric of quarrelling; my whole method
Drawn out in tables; and my instrument,
That hath the several scales upon't, shall make you
Able to quarrel at a straw's-breadth by moon-light.
And, lady, I'll have you look in a glass,
Some half an hour, but to clear your eye-sight,
Against you see your fortune; which is greater,
Than I may judge upon the sudden, trust me.
(Exit, followed by Kast. and Dame P.

Re-enter FACE

Face.—Where are you, doctor?
Sub. (within.) I'll come to you presently.
Face.—I will have this same widow, now I have seen her,
On any composition.

Re-enter SUBTLE

Sub.—What do you say?

Face.—Have you disposed of them?
Sub.—I have sent them up.
Face.—Subtle, in troth, I needs must have this widow.
Sub.—Is that the matter?
Face.—Nay, but hear me.
Sub.—Go to.
If you rebel once, Dol shall know it all:
Therefore be quiet, and obey your chance.
Face.—Nay, thou art so violent now—Do but conceive,
Thou art old, and canst not serve—
Sub.—Who cannot? I?
'Slight, I will serve her with thee, for a—
Face.—Nay,
But understand: I'll give you composition.
Sub.—I will not treat with thee; what! sell my fortune?
'Tis better than my birth-right. Do not murmur:
Win her, and carry her. If you grumble, Dol
Knows it directly.
Face.—Well, sir, I am silent.
Will you go help to fetch in Don in state? (Exit.
Sub.—I follow you, sir: we must keep Face in awe,
Or he will over-look us like a tyrant.

Re-enter FACE, *introducing* SURLY *disguised as a Spaniard*

Brain of a tailor! who comes here? Don John!
Sur.—*Señores, beso las manos a vuestras mercedes.*
Sub.—Would you had stoop'd a little, and kist our anos!
Face.—Peace, Subtle.
Sub.—Stab me; I shall never hold, man.
He looks in that deep ruff like a head in a platter,
Serv'd in by a short cloke upon two trestles.
Face.—Or, what do you say to a collar of brawn, cut down
Beneath the souse, and wriggled with a knife?
Sub.—'Slud, he does look too fat to be a Spaniard.
Face.—Perhaps some Fleming or some Hollander got him
In d'Alva's time; count Egmont's bastard.
Sub.—Don,
Your scurvy, yellow, Madrid face is welcome.
Sur.—Gratia.
Sub.—He speaks out of a fortification.
Pray God he have no squibs in those deep sets.
Sur.—*Por dios, señores, muy linda casa!*
Sub.—What says he?
Face.—Praises the house, I think;
I know no more but's action.

Sub.—Yes, the *casa,*
My precious Diego, will prove fair enough
To cozen you in. Do you mark? you shall
Be cozen'd, Diego.
Face.—Cozen'd, do you see,
My worthy Donzel, cozen'd.
Sur.—*Entiendo.*
Sub.—Do you intend it? so do we, dear Don.
Have you brought pistolets, or portagues,
My solemn Don?—Dost thou feel any?
Face. (feels his pockets.)—Full.
Sub.—You shall be emptied, Don, pumped and drawn
Dry, as they say.
Face.—Milked, in troth, sweet Don.
Sub.—See all the monsters; the great lion of all, Don.
Sur.—*Con licencia, se puede ver a esta señora?*
Sub.—What talks he now?
Face.—Of the sennora.
Sub.—O, Don,
That is the lioness, which you shall see
Also, my Don.
Face.—'Slid, Subtle, how shall we do?
Sub.—For what?
Face.—Why Dol's employ'd, you know.
Sub.—That's true.
'Fore heaven, I know not: he must stay, that's all.
Face.—Stay! that he must not by no means.
Sub.—No! why?
Face.—Unless you'll mar all. 'Slight, he will suspect it:
And then he will not pay, not half so well.
This is a travelled punk-master, and does know
All the delays; a notable hot rascal,
And looks already rampant.
Sub.—'Sdeath, and Mammon
Must not be troubled.
Face.—Mammon! in no case.
Sub.—What shall we do then?
Face.—Think: you must be sudden.
Sur.—*Entiendo que la señora es tan hermosa, que codicio tan verla, como la bien aventuranza de mi vida.*
Face. —*Mi vida!* 'Slid, Subtle, he puts me in mind o' the widow.
What dost thou say to draw her to it, ha!
And tell her 'tis her fortune? all our venture
Now lies upon't. It is but one man more,
Which of us chance to have her: and beside,

There is no maidenhead to be fear'd or lost.
What dost thou think on't, Subtle?
Sub.—Who, I? why—
Face.—The credit of our house too is engaged.
Sub.—You made me an offer for my share erewhile.
What wilt thou give me, i'faith?
Face.—O, by that light
I'll not buy now: You know your doom to me.
E'en take your lot, obey your chance, sir; win her.
And wear her out, for me.
Sub.—'Slight, I'll not work her then.
Face.—It is the common cause; therefore bethink you.
Dol else must know it, as you said.
Sub.—I care not.
Sur.—*Señores, porque se tarda tanto?*
Sub.—Faith, I am not fit, I am old.
Face.—That's now no reason, sir.
Sur.—*Puede ser de hazer burla de mi amor?*
Face.—You hear the Don too? by this air, I call,
And loose the hinges: Dol!
Sub.—A plague of hell—
Face.—Will you then do?
Sub.—You are a terrible rogue!
I'll think of this: will you, sir, call the widow?
Face.—Yes, and I'll take her too with all her faults,
Now I do think on't better.
Sub.—With all my heart, sir;
Am I discharged o' the lot?
Face.—As you please.
Sub.—Hands. (They take hands.
Face.—Remember now, that upon any change,
You never claim her.
Sub—Much good joy, and health to you, sir.
Marry a whore! fate, let me wed a witch first.
Sur.—*Por estas honradas barbas*—
Sub.—He swears by his beard.
Dispatch, and call the brother too. (Exit Face.
Sur.—*Tengo duda, señores, que no me hagan alguna traycion.*
Sub.—How, issue on? yes, præsto, sennor. Please you
Enthratha the *chambrata,* worthy don:
Where if you please the fates, in your *bathada,*
You shall be soked, and stroked, and tubb'd, and rubb'd,
And scrubb'd, and fubb'd, dear don, before you go.
You shall in faith, my scurvy baboon don.
Be curried, claw'd and flaw'd, and taw'd, indeed.

I will the heartlier go about it now,
And make the widow a punk so much the sooner,
To be revenged on this impetuous Face:
The quickly doing of it, is the grace.

(Exeunt Sub. and Surly.

SCENE II.—*Another Room in the same*

Enter FACE, KASTRIL, *and* Dame PLIANT

Face.—Come, lady: I knew the Doctor would not leave,
Till he had found the very nick of her fortune.
Kas.—To be a countess, say you, a Spanish countess, sir?
Dame P.—Why, is that better than an English countess?
Face.—Better! 'Slight, make you that a question, lady?
Kas.—Nay, she is a fool, captain, you must pardon her.
Face.—Ask from your courtier, to your inns-of-court-man,
To your mere milliner; they will tell you all,
Your Spanish gennet is the best horse; your Spanish
Stoup is the best garb: your Spanish beard
Is the best cut; your Spanish ruffs are the best
Wear; your Spanish pavin the best dance;
Your Spanish titillation in a glove
The best perfume: and for your Spanish pike,
And Spanish blade, let your poor captain speak—
Here comes the doctor.

Enter SUBTLE, *with a paper*

Sub.—My most honour'd lady,
For so I am now to style you, having found
By this my scheme, you are to undergo
An honourable fortune, very shortly.
What will you say now, if some—
Face.—I have told her all, sir;
And her right worshipful brother here, that she shall be
A countess; do not delay them, sir: a Spanish countess.
Sub.—Still, my scarce-worshipful captain, you can keep
No secret! Well, since he has told you, madam,
Do you forgive him, and I do.
Kas.—She shall do that, sir;
I'll look to't, 'tis my charge.
Sub.—Well then: nought rests
But that she fit her love now to her fortune.
Dame P.—Truly I shall never brook a Spaniard.
Sub.—No!
Dame P.—Never since eighty-eight could I abide them,
And that was some three year afore I was born, in truth.

Sub.—Come, you must love him, or be miserable,
Choose which you will.
Face.—By this good rush, persuade her,
She will cry strawberries else within this twelvemonth.
Sub.—Nay, shads and mackarel, which is worse.
Face.—Indeed, sir!
Kas.—Ods lid, you shall love him, or I'll kick you.
Dame P.—Why,
I'll do as you will have me, brother.
Kas.—Do,
Or by this hand I'll maul you.
Face.—Nay, good sir,
Be not so fierce.
Sub.—No, my enraged child;
She will be ruled. What, when she comes to taste
The pleasures of a countess! to be courted—
Face.—And kiss'd, and ruffled!
Sub.—Ay, behind the hangings.
Face.—And then come forth in pomp!
Sub.—And know her state!
Face.—Of keeping all the idolators of the chamber
Barer to her, than at their prayers!
Sub.—Is serv'd
Upon the knee!
Face.—And has her pages, ushers,
Footmen, and coaches—
Sub.—Her six mares—
Face.—Nay, eight!
Sub.—To hurry her through London, to the Exchange,
Bethlem, the china-houses—
Face.—Yes, and have
The citizens gape at her, and praise her tires,
And my lord's goose-turd bands, that ride with her.
Kas.—Most brave! By this hand, you are not my suster.
If you refuse.
Dame P.—I will not refuse, brother.

Enter SURLY

Sur.—*Que es esto, señores, que no venga? Esta tardanza me mata!*
Face.—It is the count come:
The doctor knew he would be here, by his art.
Sub.—*En gallanta madama, Don! gallantissima!*
Sur.—*Por todos los dioses, la mas acabada hermosura, que he visto en mi vida!*

Face.—Is't not a gallant language that they speak?
Kas.—An admirable language! Is't not French?
Face.—No, Spanish, sir.
Kas.—It goes like law-French,
And that, they say, is the courtliest language.
Face.—List, sir.
Sur.—*El sol ha perdido su lumbre, con el esplandor que trae esta dama! Valgame dios!*
Face.—He admires your sister.
Kas.—Must not she make curt'sy?
Sub.—Ods will, she must go to him, man, and kiss him!
It is the Spanish fashion, for the women
To make first court.
Face.—'Tis true he tells you, sir:
His art knows all.
Sur.—*Porque no se acude?*
Kas.—He speaks to her, I think.
Face.—That he does, sir.
Sur.—*Por el amor de dios, que es esto que se tarda?*
Kas.—Nay, see: she will not understand him! gull,
Noddy.
Dame P.—What say you, brother?
Kas.—Ass, my suster.
Go kuss him, as the cunning man would have you;
I'll thrust a pin in your buttocks else.
Face.—O no, sir.
Sur.—*Señora mia, mi persona esta muy indigna de allegar a tanta hermosura.*
Face.—Does he not use her bravely?
Kas.—Bravely, i'faith!
Face.—Nay, he will use her better.
Kas.—Do you think so?
Sur.—*Señora, si sera servida, entremonos.*
(Exit with Dame Pliant.
Kas.—Where does he carry her?
Face.—Into the garden, sir;
Take you no thought: I must interpret for her.
Sub.—Give Dol the word. (Aside to Face, who goes out.)—
Come, my fierce child, advance,
We'll to our quarrelling lesson again.
Kas.—Agreed.
I love a Spanish boy with all my heart.
Sub.—Nay, and by this mean, sir, you shall be brother
To a great count.

Kas.—Ay, I knew that at first.
This match will advance the house of the Kastrils.
Sub.—'Pray God your sister prove but pliant!
Kas.—Why,
Her name is so, by her other husband.
Sub.—How!
Kas.—The widow Pliant. Knew you not that?
Sub.—No faith, sir;
Yet, by erection of her figure, I guest it.
Come, let's go practise.
Kas.—Yes, but do you think, doctor,
I e'er shall quarrel well?
Sub.—I warrant you. (Exeunt.

SCENE III.—*Another Room in the same*

Enter Dol *in her fit of raving, followed by* Mammon

Dol.—For after Alexander's death—
Mam.—Good lady—
Dol.—That Perdiccas and Antigonus, were slain,
The two that stood, Seleuc', and Ptolomee—
Mam.—Madam.
Dol.—Made up the two legs, and the fourth beast,
That was Gog-north, and Egypt-south: which after
Was call'd Gog-iron-leg, and South-iron-leg—
Mam.—Lady—
Dol.—And then Gog-horned. So was Egypt, too:
Then Egypt-clay-leg, and Gog-clay-leg—
Mam.—Sweet madam.
Dol.—And last Gog-dust, and Egypt-dust, which fall
In the last link of the fourth chain. And these
Be stars in story, which none see, or look at—
Mam.—What shall I do?
Dol.—For, as he says, except
We call the rabbins, and the heathen Greeks—
Mam.—Dear lady.
Dol.—To come from Salem, and from Athens,
And teach the people of Great Britain—

Enter Face, *hastily, in his Servant's Dress*

Face.—What's the matter, sir?
Dol.—To speak the tongue of Eber, and Javan—
Mam.—O,
She's in her fit.

Dol.—We shall know nothing—
Face.—Death, sir,
Dol.—Where then a learned linguist
Shall see the ancient used communion
Of vowels and consonants—
Face.—My master will hear!
Dol.—A wisdom, which Pythagoras held most high—
Mam.—Sweet honorable lady!
Dol.—To comprise
All sounds of voices, in few marks of letters—
Face.—Nay, you must never hope to lay her now,
(They all speak together.
Dol.—And so we may arrive by Talmud skill,
And profane Greek, to raise the building up
Of Helen's house against the Ismaelite,
King of Thogarma, and his habergions
Brimstony, blue, and fiery; and the force
Of king Abaddon, and the beast of Cittim:
Which rabbi David Kimchi, Onkelos,
And Aben Ezra do interpret Rome.
Face.—How did you put her into't?
Mam.—Alas! I talk'd
Of a fifth monarchy I would erect,
With the philosopher's stone, by chance, and she
Falls on the other four straight.
Face.—Out of Broughton!
I told you so. 'Slid, stop her mouth.
Mam.—I'st best?
Face.—She'll never leave else. If the old man hear her,
We are but fæces, ashes.
Sub. (within.)—What's to do there?
Face.—O, we are lost! Now she hears him, she is quiet.

Enter SUBTLE, *they run different ways*

Mam.—Where shall I hide me!
Sub.—How! what sight is here?
Close deeds of darkness, and that shun the light!
Bring him again. Who is he? What, my son!
O, I have lived too long.
Mam.—Nay, good, dear father,
There was no unchaste purpose.
Sub.—Not! and flee me,
When I come in?
Mam.—That was my error.

Sub.—Error!
Guilt, guilt, my son: give it the right name. No marvel,
If I found check in our great work within,
When such affairs as these were managing!
Mam.—Why, have you so?
Sub.—It has stood still this half hour:
And all the rest of our less works gone back.
Where is the instrument of wickedness,
My lewd false drudge?
Mam.—Nay, good sir, blame not him;
Believe me, 'twas against his will or knowledge:
I saw her by chance.
Sub.—Will you commit more sin,
To excuse a varlet?
Mam.—By my hope, 'tis true, sir.
Sub.—Nay, then I wonder less, if you, for whom
The blessing was prepared, would so tempt heaven,
And lose your fortunes.
Mam.—Why, sir?
Sub.—This will retard
The work, a month at least.
Mam.—Why, if it do,
What remedy? But think it not, good father:
Our purposes were honest.
Sub.—As they were,
So the reward will prove.—(A loud explosion within.)
How now! ah me!
God, and all saints be good to us.—

Re-enter FACE

What's that?
Face.—O, sir, we are defeated! all the works
Are flown *in fumo,* every glass is burst:
Furnace, and all rent down! as if a bolt
Of thunder had been driven through the house.
Retorts, receivers, pelicans, bolt-heads,
All struck in shivers!
(Subtle falls down as in a swoon.
Help, good sir! alas,
Coldness, and death invades him. Nay, sir Mammon,
Do the fair offices of a man! you stand,
As you were readier to depart than he.
(Knocking within.
Who's there? my lord her brother is come.
Mam.—Ha, Lungs!

Face.—His coach is at the door. Avoid his sight,
For he's as furious as his sister's mad.
Mam.—Alas!
Face.—My brain is quite undone with the fume, sir,
I ne'er must hope to be mine own man again.
Mam.—Is all lost, Lungs? will nothing be preserv'd
Of all our cost?
Face.—Faith, very little, sir;
A peck of coals or so, which is cold comfort, sir.
Mam.—O my voluptuous mind! I am justly punish'd.
Face.—And so am I, sir.
Mam.—Cast from all my hopes—
Face.—Nay, certainties, sir.
Mam.—By mine own base affections.
Sub. (seeming to come to himself.)—O, the curst fruits of vice and lust!
Mam.—Good father,
It was my sin. Forgive it.
Sub.—Hangs my roof
Over us still, and will not fall, O justice,
Upon us, for this wicked man!
Face.—Nay, look, sir,
You grieve him now with staying in his sight:
Good sir, the nobleman will come too, and take you,
And that may breed a tragedy.
Mam.—I'll go.
Face.—Ay, and repent at home, sir. It may be,
For some good penance you may have it yet;
A hundred pound to the box at Bethlem—
Mam.—Yes.
Face.—For the restoring such as—have their wits.
Mam.—I'll do't.
Face.—I'll send one to you to receive it.
Mam.—Do.
Is no projection left?
Face.—All flown, or stinks, sir.
Mam.—Will nought be sav'd that's good for med'cine, think'st thou?
Face.—I cannot tell, sir. There will be perhaps,
Something about the scraping of the shards,
Will cure the itch,—though not your itch of mind, sir.
(Aside.
It shall be saved for you, and sent home. Good sir,
This way, for fear the lord should meet you.

(Exit Mammon.

Sub. (raising his head.)—Face!
Face.—Ay.
Sub.—Is he gone?
Face.—Yes, and as heavily
As all the gold he hoped for were in's blood.
Let us be light though.
Sub. (leaping up.)—Ay, as balls, and bound
And hit our heads against the roof for joy:
There's so much of our care now cast away.
Face.—Now to our don.
Sub.—Yes, your young widow by this time
Is made a countess, Face; she has been in travail
Of a young heir for you.
Face.—Good sir.
Sub.—Off with your case,
And greet her kindly, as a bridegroom should,
After these common hazards.
Face.—Very well, sir.
Will you go fetch don Diego off, the while?
Sub.—And fetch him over too, if you'll be pleased, sir:
Would Dol were in her place, to pick his pockets now!
Face.—Why, you can do't as well, if you would set to't.
I pray you prove your virtue.
Sub.—For your sake, sir. (Exeunt.

SCENE IV.—*Another Room in the same*

Enter SURLY *and* Dame PLIANT

Sur.—Lady, you see into what hands you are fall'n;
'Mongst what a nest of villains! and how near
Your honour was t'have catch'd a certain clap,
Through your credulity, had I but been
So punctually forward, as place, time,
And other circumstances would have made a man;
For you're a handsome woman: would you were wise too!
I am a gentleman come here disguised,
Only to find the knaveries of this citadel;
And where I might have wrong'd your honor and have not,
I claim some interest in your love. You are,
They say, a widow, rich: and I'm a batchelor,
Worth nought: your fortunes may make me a man.
As mine have preserv'd you a woman. Think upon it,
And whether I have deserv'd you or no.

Dame P.—I will, sir.
Sur.—And for these household-rogues, let me alone
To treat with them.

Enter SUBTLE

Sub.—How doth my noble Diego,
And my dear madam countess? hath the count
Been courteous, lady? liberal, and open?
Donzel, methinks you look melancholic,
After your coitum, and scurvy: truly,
I do not like the dulness of your eye;
It hath a heavy cast, 'tis upsee Dutch,
And says you are a lumpish whore-master.
Be lighter, I will make your pockets so.
(Attempts to pick them.
Sur. (throws open his cloak.)—Will you, don bawd and pick-purse? (strikes him down.) how now! reel you?
Stand up, sir, you shall find, since I am so heavy,
I'll give you equal weight.
Sub.—Help! murder!
Sur.—No, sir,
There's no such thing intended: a good cart,
And a clean whip shall ease you of that fear.
I am the Spanish don that should be cozen'd,
Do you see, cozen'd! Where's your captain Face,
That parcel broker, and whole-bawd, all rascal!

Enter FACE, *in his uniform*

Face.—How, Surly!
Sur.—O, make your approach, good captain.
I have found from whence your copper rings and spoons
Come, now wherewith you cheat abroad in taverns.
'Twas here you learn'd t' anoint your boot with brimstone,
Then rub men's gold on't for a kind of touch,
And say 'twas naught, when you had changed the colour,
That you might have't for nothing. And this doctor,
Your sooty, smoky-bearded compeer, he
Will close you so much gold, in a bolt's-head,
And, on a turn, convey in the stead another
With sublimed mercury, that shall burst in the heat,
And fly out all *in fumo!* Then weeps Mammon;
Then swoons his worship. (Face slips out.) Or, he is the Faustus,
That casteth figures and can conjure, cures

Plagues, piles, and pox, by the ephemerides,
And holds intelligence with all the bawds
And midwives of three shires: while you send in—
Captain—what! is he gone?—damsels with child,
Wives that are barren, or the waiting-maid
With the green sickness. (Seizes Subtle as he is retiring.
Nay, sir, you must tarry,
Though he be scaped; and answer by the ears, sir.

Re-enter FACE, *with* KASTRIL

Face.—Why, now's the time, if ever you will quarrel
Well, as they say, and be a true-born child:
The doctor and your sister both are abused.
Kas.—Where is he? which is he? he is a slave,
Whate'er he is, and the son of a whore.—Are you
The man, sir, I would know?
Sur.—I should be loth, sir,
To confess so much.
Kas.—Then you lie in your throat.
Sur.—How!
Face. (to Kastril.)—A very errant rogue, sir, and a cheater,
Employ'd here by another conjurer
That does not love the doctor, and would cross him,
If he knew how.
Sur.—Sir, you are abused.
Kas.—You lie:
And 'tis no matter.
Face.—Well said, sir! He is
The impudent'st rascal—
Sur.—You are indeed: Will you hear me, sir?
Face.—By no means: bid him be gone.
Kas.—Begone, sir, quickly.
Sur.—This's strange!—Lady, do you inform your brother.
Face.—There is not such a foist in all the town,
The doctor had him presently; and finds yet,
The Spanish count will come here.—Bear up, Subtle.
(Aside.
Sub.—Yes, sir, he must appear within this hour.
Face.—And yet this rogue would come in a disguise,
By the temptation of another spirit,
To trouble our art, though he could not hurt it!
Kas.—Ay,
I know—Away, (to his sister,) you talk like a foolish mauther.

Sur.—Sir, all is truth she says.
Face.—Do not believe him, sir.
He is the lying'st swabber! Come your ways, sir.
Sur.—You are valiant out of company!
Kas.—Yes, how then, sir?

Enter DRUGGER, *with a piece of damask*

Face.—Nay, here's an honest fellow, too, that knows him,
And all his tricks. Make good what I say, Abel,
This cheater would have cozen'd thee o' the widow.—
(Aside to Drug.
He owes this honest Drugger here, seven pound,
He has had on him, in two-penny'orths of tobacco.
Drug.—Yes, sir.
And he has damn'd himself three terms to pay me.
Face.—And what does he owe for lotium?
Drug.—Thirty shillings, sir;
And for six syringes.
Sur.—Hydra of villainy!
Face.—Nay, sir, you must quarrel him out o' the house.
Kas.—I will:
—Sir, if you get not out o' doors, you lie;
And you are a pimp.
Sur.—Why, this is madness, sir,
Not valour in you; I must laugh at this.
Kas.—It is my humour: you are a pimp and a trig,
And an *Amadis de Gaul,* or a Don Quixote.
Drug.—Or a knight o' the curious coxcomb, do you see?

Enter ANANIAS

Ana.—Peace to the household!
Kas.—I'll keep peace for no man.
Ana.—Casting of dollars is concluded lawful.
Kas.—Is he the constable?
Sub.—Peace, Ananias.
Face.—No, sir.
Kas.—Then you are an otter, and a shad, a whit,
A very tim.
Sur.—You'll hear me, sir?
Kas.—I will not.
Ana.—What is the motive?
Sub.—Zeal in the young gentleman,
Against his Spanish slops.
Ana.—They are profane,

Lewd, superstitious, and idolatrous breeches.
Sur.—New rascals!
Kas.—Will you begone, sir?
Ana.—Avoid, Sathan!
Thou art not of the light: That ruff of pride
About thy neck, betrays thee; and is the same
With that which the unclean birds, in seventy-seven,
Were seen to prank it with on divers coasts:
Thou look'st like antichrist, in that lewd hat.
Sur.—I must give way.
Kas.—Be gone, sir.
Sur.—But I'll take
A course with you—
Ana.—Depart, proud Spanish fiend!
Sur.—Captain and Doctor.
Ana.—Child of perdition!
Kas.—Hence, sir! (Exit Surly.
Did I not quarrel bravely?
Face.—Yes, indeed, sir.
Kas.—Nay, an I give my mind to't, I shall do't.
Face.—O, you must follow, sir, and threaten him tame:
He'll turn again else.
Kas.—I'll re-turn him then. (Exit.
(Subtle takes Ananias aside.
Face.—Drugger, this rogue prevented us for thee:
We had determin'd that thou should'st have come
In a Spanish suit, and have carried her so; and he,
A brokerly slave! goes, puts it on himself.
Hast brought the damask?
Drug.—Yes, sir.
Face.—Thou must borrow
A Spanish suit: hast thou no credit with the players?
Drug.—Yes, sir; did you never see me play the Fool?
Face.—I know not, Nab:—Thou shalt, if I can help it.—(Aside.
Hieronimo's old cloak, ruff, and hat will serve;
I'll tell thee more when thou bring'st 'em. (Exit Drugger.
Ana.—Sir, I know
The Spaniard hates the brethren, and hath spies
Upon their actions: and that this was one
I make no scruple.—But the holy synod
Have been in prayer and meditation for it;
And 'tis reveal'd no less to them than me,
That casting of money is most lawful.
Sub.—True,

But here I cannot do it; if the house
Shou'd chance to be suspected, all would out,
And we be lock'd up in the Tower for ever,
To make gold there for the state, never come out;
And then are you defeated.

Ana.—I will tell
This to the elders and the weaker brethren,
That the whole company of the separation
May join in humble prayer again.

Sub.—And fasting.

Ana.—Yea, for some fitter place. The peace of mind
Rest with these walls! (Exit

Sub.—Thanks, courteous Ananias.

Face.—What did he come for?

Sub.—About casting dollars,
Presently out of hand. And so I told him,
A Spanish minister came here to spy,
Against the faithful—

Face.—I conceive. Come, Subtle,
Thou art so down upon the least disaster!
How wouldst thou ha' done, if I had not help't thee out?

Sub.—I thank thee, Face, for the angry boy, i'faith.

Face.—Who would have look'd it should have been that rascal,
Surly? he had dyed his beard and all. Well, sir,
Here's damask come to make you a suit.

Sub.—Where's Drugger?

Face.—He is gone to borrow me a Spanish habit;
I'll be the count, now.

Sub.—But where's the widow?

Face.—Within, with my lord's sister: madam Dol
Is entertaining her.

Sub.—By your favour, Face,
Now she is honest, I will stand again.

Face.—You will not offer it.

Sub.—Why?

Face.—Stand to your word,
Or—here comes Dol, she knows—

Sub.—You are tyrannous still.

Enter Dol, *hastily*

Face.—Strict for my right.—How now, Dol? Hast (thou) told her,
The Spanish count will come?

Dol.—Yes; but another is come,

You little look'd for!
Face.—Who is that?
Dol.—Your master;
The master of the house.
Sub.—How, Dol!
Face.—She lies,
This is some trick. Come, leave your quiblins, Dorothy.
Dol.—Look out, and see. (Face goes to the window.
Sub.—Art thou in earnest?
Dol.—'Slight,
Forty o' the neighbours are about him, talking.
Face.—'Tis he, by this good day.
Dol.—'Twill prove ill day
For some on us.
Face.—We are undone, and taken.
Dol.—Lost, I'm afraid.
Sub.—You said he would not come,
While there died one a week within the liberties.
Face.—No: 'twas within the walls.
Sub.—Was't so! cry you mercy.
I thought the liberties. What shall we do now, Face?
Face.—Be silent: not a word, if he call or knock.
I'll into mine old shape again and meet him,
Of Jeremy, the butler. In the mean time,
Do you two pack up all the goods and purchase,
That we can carry in the two trunks. I'll keep him
Off for to-day, if I cannot longer: and then
At night, I'll ship you both away to Ratcliff,
Where we will meet to-morrow, and there we'll share.
Let Mammon's brass and pewter keep the cellar;
We'll have another time for that. But, Dol,
'Prythee go heat a little water quickly;
Subtle must have shave me: all my captain's beard
Must off, to make me appear smooth Jeremy.
You'll do it?
Sub.—Yes, I'll shave you, as well as I can.
Face.—And not cut my throat, but trim me?
Sub.—You shall see, sir. (Exeunt.

ACT V

SCENE I.—*Before* Lovewit's *Door*

Enter Lovewit, *with several of the* Neighbours

Love.—Has there been such resort, say you?

1 Nei.—Daily, sir.
2 Nei.—And nightly, too.
3 Nei.—Ay, some as brave as lords.
4 Nei.—Ladies and gentlewomen.
5 Nei.—Citizens' wives.
1 Nei.—And knights.
6 Nei.—In coaches.
2 Nei.—Yes, and oyster women.
1 Nei.—Beside other gallants.
3 Nei.—Sailors' wives.
4 Nei.—Tobacco men.
5 Nei. Another Pimlico!
Love.—What should my knave advance,
To draw this company? he hung out no banners
Of a strange calf with five legs to be seen,
Of a huge lobster with six claws?
6 Nei.—No, sir.
3 Nei.—We had gone in then, sir.
Love.—He has no gift
Of teaching in the nose that e'er I knew of.
You saw no bills set up that promised cure
Of agues, or the tooth-ache?
2 Nei.—No such thing, sir.
Love.—Nor heard a drum struck for baboons or puppets?
5 Nei.—Neither, sir.
Love.—What device should he bring forth now?
I love a teeming wit as I love my nourishment:
'Pray God he have not kept such open house,
That he hath sold my hangings, and my bedding!
I left him nothing else. If he have eat them,
A plague o' the moth, say I! Sure he has got
Some bawdy pictures to call all this ging!
The friar and the nun; or the new motion
For the knight's courser covering the parson's mare;
The boy of six year old with the great thing:
Or't may be, he has the fleas that run at tilt
Upon a table, or some dog to dance.
When saw you him?
1 Nei.—Who, sir, Jeremy?
2 Nei.—Jeremy butler?
We saw him not this month.
Love.—How!
4 Nei.—Not these five weeks, sir.
6 Nei.—These six weeks at the least.

Love.—You amaze me, neighbours!
5 Nei.—Sure, if your worship know not where he is,
He's slipt away.
6 Nei.—Pray God, he be not made away.
Love.—Ha! it's no time to question, then. (Knocks at the door.
6 Nei.—About
Some three weeks since, I heard a doleful cry,
As I sat up a mending my wife's stockings.
Love.—'Tis strange that none will answer! Didst thou hear
A cry, sayst thou?
6 Nei.—Yes, sir, like unto a man
That had been strangled an hour, and could not speak.
2 Nei.—I heard it too, just this day three weeks, at two o'clock
Next morning.
Love.—These be miracles, or you make them so!
A man an hour strangled, and could not speak,
And both you heard him cry?
3 Nei.—Yes, downward, sir.
Love.—Thou art a wise fellow. Give me thy hand, I pray thee,
What trade art thou on?
3 Nei.—A smith, an't please your worship.
Love.—A smith! then lend me thy help to get this door open.
3 Nei.—That I will presently, sir, but fetch my tools— (Exit.
1 Nei.—Sir, best to knock again, afore you break it.
Love.—(knocks again). I will.

Enter FACE, *in his butler's livery*

Face.—What mean you, sir?
1, 2, 4 Nei.—O, here's Jeremy!
Face.—Good sir, some from the door.
Love.—Why, what's the matter?
Face.—Yet farther, you are too near yet.
Love.—In the name of wonder,
What means the fellow!
Face.—The house, sir, has been visited.
Love.—What, with the plague? stand thou then farther.
Face.—No, sir.
I had it not.
Love.—Who had it then? I left
None else but thee in the house.
Face.—Yes, sir, my fellow,
The cat that kept the buttery, had it on her
A week before I spied it; but I got her
Convey'd away in the night: and so I shut

The house up for a month—
Love.—How!
Face.—Purposing then, sir,
T' have burnt rose-vinegar, treacle, and tar,
And have made it sweet, that you shou'd ne'er have known it;
Because I knew the news would but afflict you, sir.
Love.—Breathe less, and farther off! Why this is stranger:
The neighbours tell me all here that the doors
Have still been open—
Face.—How, sir!
Love.—Gallants, men and women,
And of all sorts, tag-rag, been seen to flock here
In threaves, these ten weeks, as to a second Hogsden,
In days of Pimlico and Eye-bright.
Face.—Sir,
Their wisdoms will not say so.
Love.—To-day they speak
Of coaches, and gallants; one in a French hood
Went in, they tell me; and another was seen
In a velvet gown at the window: divers more
Pass in and out.
Face.—They did pass through the doors then,
Or walls, I assure their eye-sights, and their spectacles;
For here, sir, are the keys, and here have been,
In this my pocket, now above twenty days:
And for before, I kept the fort alone there.
But that 'tis yet not deep in the afternoon,
I should believe my neighbours had seen double
Through the black pot, and made these apparitions!
For, on my faith to your worship, for these three weeks
And upwards the door has not been open'd.
Love.—Strange!
1 Nei.—Good faith, I think I saw a coach.
2 Nei.—And I too,
I'd have been sworn.
Love.—Do you but think it now?
And but one coach?
4 Nei.—We cannot tell, sir: Jeremy
Is a very honest fellow.
Face.—Did you see me at all?
1 Nei.—No; that we are sure on.
2 Nei.—I'll be sworn o' that.
Love.—Fine rogues to have your testimonies built on!

Re-enter Third Neighbour, *with his Tools*

3 Nei.—Is Jeremy come!
1 Nei.—O yes; you may leave your tools;
We were deceived, he says.
2 Nei.—He has had the keys;
And the door has been shut these three weeks.
3 Nei.—Like enough.
Love.—Peace and get hence, you changelings.

Enter Surly *and* Mammon

Face.—Surly come!
And Mammon made acquainted! they'll tell all.
How shall I beat them off? what shall I do?
Nothing's more wretched than a guilty conscience. (Aside.
Sur.—No, sir, he was a great physician. This,
It was no bawdy house, but a mere chancel!
You knew the lord and his sister.
Mam.—Nay, good Surly—
Sur.—The happy word, Be rich—
Mam.—Play not the tyrant.—
Sur.—Should be to-day pronounced to all your friends.
And where be your andirons now? and your brass pots,
That should have been golden flagons, and great wedges?
Mam.—Let me but breathe. What, they have shut their doors,
Methinks!
Sur.—Ay, now 'tis holiday with them.
Mam.—Rogues, (He and Surly knock.
Cozeners, impostors, bawds!
Face.—What mean you, sir?
Mam.—To enter if we can.
Face.—Another man's house!
Here is the owner, sir: turn you to him,
And speak your business.
Mam.—Are you, sir, the owner?
Love.—Yes, sir.
Mam.—And are those knaves within your cheaters?
Love.—What knaves, what cheaters?
Mam.—Subtle and his Lungs.
Face.—The gentleman is distracted, sir! No lungs,
Nor lights have been seen here these three weeks, sir,
Within these doors, upon my word.
Sur.—Your word,
Groom arrogant!
Face.—Yes, sir, I am the housekeeper,

And know the keys have not been out of my hands.
Sur.—This is a new Face.
Face.—You do mistake the house, sir:
What sign was't at?
Sur.—You rascal! this is one
Of the confederacy. Come, let's get officers,
And force the door.
Love.—'Pray you stay, gentlemen.
Sur.—No, sir, we'll come with warrant.
Mam.—Ay, and then
We shall have your doors open. (Exeunt Mam. and Sur.
Love.—What means this?
Face.—I cannot tell, sir.
1 Nei.—These are two of the gallants
That we do think we saw.
Face.—Two of the fools!
You talk as idly as they. Good faith, sir,
I think the moon has crazed 'em all.—O me,

Enter KASTRIL

The angry boy come too! He'll make a noise,
And ne'er away till he have betray'd us all. (Aside.
Kas.—(knocking). What rogues, bawds, slaves, you'll open the door, anon!
Punk, cockatrice, my suster! By this light
I'll fetch the marshal to you. You are a whore
To keep your castle—
Face.—Who would you speak with, sir?
Kas.—The bawdy doctor, and the cozening captain,
And puss my suster.
Love.—This is something, sure.
Face.—Upon my trust, the doors were never open, sir.
Kas.—I have heard all their tricks told me twice over,
By the fat knight and the lean gentleman.
Love.—Here comes another.

Enter ANANIAS *and* TRIBULATION

Face.—Ananias too!
And his pastor!
Tri.—(beating at the door.) The doors are shut against us.
Ana.—Come forth, you seed of sulphur, sons of fire!
Your stench it is broke forth; abomination
Is in the house.
Kas.—Ay, my suster's there.

Ana.—The place,
It is become a cage of unclean birds.
Kas.—Yes, I will fetch the scavenger, and the constable.
Tri.—You shall do well.
Ana.—We'll join to weed them out.
Kas.—You will not come then, punk devise, my sister!
Ana.—Call her not sister; she's a harlot verily.
Kas.—I'll raise the street.
Love.—Good gentleman, a word.
Ana.—Satan avoid, and hinder not our zeal!
(Exeunt Ana., Trib., and Kast.
Love.—The world's turn'd Bethlem.
Face.—These are all broke loose,
Out of St, Katherine's, where they use to keep
The better sort of mad-folks.
1 Nei.—All these persons
We saw go in and out here.
2 Nei.—Yes, indeed, sir.
3 Nei.—These were the parties.
Face.—Peace, you drunkards! Sir,
I wonder at it: please you to give me leave
To touch the door, I'll try an the lock be chang'd.
Love.—It mazes me!
Face. (goes to the door.)—Good faith, sir, I believe
There's no such thing: 'tis all *deceptio visus*—
Would I could get him away. (Aside.
Dap. (within.)—Master captain! master doctor!
Love.—Who's that?
Face.—Our clerk within, that I forgot! (Aside.) I know not, sir.
Dap. (within.)—For God's sake, when will her grace be at leisure?
Face.—Ha!
Illusions, some spirit o' the air!—His gag is melted,
And now he sets out the throat. (Aside.
Dap. (within.)—I am almost stifled—
Face.—Would you were altogether. (Aside.
Love.—'Tis in the house.
Ha! list.
Face.—Believe it, sir, in the air.
Love.—Peace, you.
Dap. (within.)—Mine aunt's grace does not use me well.
Sub. (within.)—You fool,
Peace, you'll mar all.

Face. (speaks through the key-hole, while Lovewit advances to the door unobserved.)—Or you will else, you rogue.
Love.—O, is it so? then you converse with spirits!—
Come, sir. No more of your tricks, good Jeremy,
The truth, the shortest way.
Face.—Dismiss this rabble, sir.—
What shall I do? I am catch'd. (Aside.
Love.—Good neighbours,
I thank you all. You may depart. (Exeunt Neighbours.)—
Come, sir,
You know that I am an indulgent master;
And therefore conceal nothing. What's your medicine,
To draw so many several sorts of wild fowl?
Face.—Sir, you were wont to affect mirth and wit—
But here's no place to talk on't in the street.
Give me but leave to make the best of my fortune,
And only pardon me the abuse of your house:
It's all I beg. I'll help you to a widow,
In recompence, that you shall give me thanks for,
Will make you seven years younger, and a rich one.
'Tis but your putting on a Spanish cloak:
I have her within. You need not fear the house;
It was not visited.
Love.—But by me, who came
Sooner than you expected.
Face.—It is true, sir.
'Pray you forgive me.
Love.—Well: let's see your widow. (Exeunt.

SCENE II.—*A Room in the same*

Enter SUBTLE, *leading in* DAPPER, *with his eyes bound as before*

Sub.—How! have you eaten your gag?
Dap.—Yes faith, it crumbled
Away in my mouth.
Sub.—You have spoil'd all then.
Dap.—No!
I hope my aunt of Fairy will forgive me.
Sub.—Your aunt's a gracious lady; but in troth
You were to blame.
Dap.—The fume did overcome me,
And I did do't to stay my stomach. 'Pray you
So satisfy her grace.

Enter FACE, *in his uniform*

Here comes the captain.

Face.—How now! is his mouth down?
Sub.—Ay, he has spoken!
Face.—A pox, I heard him, and you too.—He's undone then.—
I have been fain to say, the house is haunted
With spirits, to keep churl back.
Sub.—And hast thou done it?
Face.—Sure, for this night.
Sub.—Why, then triumph and sing
Of face so famous, the precious king
Of present wits.
Face.—Did you not hear the coil
About the door?
Sub.—Yes, and I dwindled with it.
Face.—Shew him his aunt, and let him be dispatch'd
I'll send her to you. (Exit Face.
Sub.—Well, sir, your aunt her grace
Will give you audience presently, on my suit,
And the captain's word that you did not eat your gag
In any contempt of her highness. (Unbinds his eyes.
Dap.—Not I, in troth, sir.

Enter DOL, *like the Queen of Fairy*

Sub.—Here she is come. Down o' your knees and wriggle:
She has a stately presence. (Dapper kneels, and shuffles towards her.) Good! Yet nearer,
And bid, God save you!
Dap.—Madam!
Sub.—And your aunt.
Dap.—And my most gracious aunt, God save your grace.
Dol.—Nephew, we thought to have been angry with you;
But that sweet face of yours hath turn'd the tide,
And made it flow with joy, that ebb'd of love.
Arise, and touch our velvet gown.
Sub.—The skirts,
And kiss 'em. So!
Dol.—Let me now stroak that head.
Much, nephew, shalt thou win, much shalt thou spend,
Much shalt thou give away, much shalt thou lend.
Sub.—Ay, much! indeed. (Aside.) Why do you not thank her grace?
Dap.—I cannot speak for joy.

Sub.—See the kind wretch!
Your grace's kinsman right.
Dol.—Give me the bird.
Here is your fly in a purse, about your neck, cousin;
Wear it, and feed it about this day sev'n-night,
On your right wrist—
Sub.—Open a vein with a pin.
And let it suck but once a week; till then,
You must not look on't.
Dol.—No: and kinsman,
Bear yourself worthy of the blood you come on.
Sub.—Her grace would have you eat no more Woolsack pies.
Nor Dagger frumety.
Dol.—Nor break his fast
In Heaven and Hell.
Sub.—She's with you every where!
Nor play with costarmongers, at mum-chance, tray-trip,
God make you rich; (when as your aunt has done it;)
But keep
The gallant'st company, and the best games—
Dap.—Yes, sir.
Sub.—Gleek and primero: and what you get, be true to us.
Dap.—By this hand, I will.
Sub.—You may bring's a thousand pound
Before to-morrow night, if but three thousand
Be stirring, an you will.
Dap.—I swear I will then.
Sub.—Your fly will learn you all games.
Face. (within.)—Have you done there?
Sub.—Your grace will command him no more duties?
Dol.—No:
But come, and see me often. I may chance
To leave him three or four hundred chests of treasure,
And some twelve thousand acres of fairy land,
If he game well and comely with good gamesters.
Sub.—There's a kind aunt! kiss her departing part.—
But you must sell your forty mark a year, now.
Dap.—Ay' sir, I mean.
Sub.—Or, give't away; pox on't!
Dap.—I'll give't mine aunt: I'll go and fetch the writings. (Exit.
Sub.—'Tis well—away!

Re-enter FACE

Face.—Where's Subtle?

Sub.—Here: what news?
Face.—Drugger is at the door, go take his suit,
And bid him fetch a parson, presently;
Say, he shall marry the widow. Thou shalt spend
A hundred pound by the service! (Exit Subtle.) Now, queen Dol,
Have you pack'd up all?
Dol.—Yes.
Face.—And how do you like
The lady Pliant?
Dol.—A good dull innocent.

Re-enter SUBTLE

Sub.—Here's your Hieronimo's cloak and hat.
Face.—Give me them.
Sub.—And the ruff too?
Face.—Yes; I'll come to you presently. (Exit.
Sub.—Now he is gone about his project, Dol,
I told you of, for the widow.
Dol.—'Tis direct
Against our articles.
Sub.—Well, we will fit him, wench.
Hast thou gull'd her of her jewels or her bracelets?
Dol.—No; but I will do't.
Sub.—Soon at night, my Dolly,
When we are shipp'd, and all our goods aboard,
Eastward for Ratcliff; we will turn our course
To Brainford, westward, if thou sayst the word,
And take our leaves of this o'er-weening rascal,
This peremptory Face.
Dol.—Content, I'm weary of him.
Sub.—Thou'st cause, when the slave will run a wiving, Dol,
Against the instrument that was drawn between us.
Dol.—I'll pluck his bird as bare as I can.
Sub.—Yes, tell her,
She must by any means address some present
To the cunning man, make him amends for wronging
His art with her suspicion; send a ring
Or chain of pearl; she will be tortured else
Extremely in her sleep, say, and have strange things
Come to her. Wilt thou?
Dol.—Yes.
Sub.—My fine flitter-mouse,
My bird o' the night! we'll tickle it at the Pigeons,

When we have all, and may unlock the trunks,
And say, this's mine, and thine; and thine, and mine.
(They kiss.

Re-enter FACE

Face.—What now! a billing?
Sub.—Yes, a little exalted
In the good passage of our stock-affairs.
Face.—Drugger has brought his parson; take him in, Subtle,
And send Nab back again to wash his face.
Sub.—I will: and shave himself. (Exit.
Face.—If you can get him.
Dol.—You are hot upon it, Face, whate'er it is!
Face.—A trick that Dol shall spend ten pound a month by.

Re-enter SUBTLE

Is he gone?
Sub.—The chaplain waits you in the hall, sir.
Face.—I'll go bestow him. (Exit.
Dol.—He'll now marry her, instantly.
Sub.—He cannot yet, he is not ready. Dear Dol.
Cozen her of all thou canst. To deceive him
Is no deceit, but justice, that would break
Such an inextricable tie as ours was.
Dol.—Let me alone to fit him.

Re-enter FACE

Face.—Come, my venturers,
You have pack'd up all? where be the trunks? bring forth.
Sub.—Here.
Face.—Let us see them. Where's the money?
Sub.—Here,
In this.
Face.—Mammon's ten pound; eight score before:
The brethren's money, this. Drugger's and Dapper's.
What paper's that?
Dol.—The jewel of the waiting-maid's,
That stole it from her lady, to know certain—
Face.—If she should have precedence of her mistress?
Dol.—Yes.
Face.—What box is that?
Sub.—The fish-wives' rings, I think,
And the ale-wives' single money. Is't not, Dol?
Dol.—Yes; and the whistle that the sailor's wife

Brought you to know an her husband were with Ward.
Face.—We'll wet it tomorrow; and our silver-beakers
And tavern cups. Where be the French petticoats,
And girdles and hangers?
Sub.—Here, in the trunk,
And the bolts of lawn.
Face.—Is Drugger's damask there,
And the tobacco?
Sub.—Yes.
Face.—Give me the keys.
Dol.—Why you the keys?
Sub.—No matter, Dol; because
We shall not open them before he comes.
Face.—'Tis true, you shall not open them, indeed;
Nor have them forth, do you see? not forth, Dol.
Dol.—No!
Face.—No, my smock rampant. The right is, my master
Knows all, has pardon'd me, and he will keep them;
Doctor, 'tis true—you look—for all your figures:
I sent for him indeed. Wherefore, good partners,
Both he and she be satisfied; for here
Determines the indenture tripartite
'Twixt Subtle, Dol, and Face. All I can do
Is to help you over the wall, o' the back-side,
Or lend you a sheet to save your velvet gown, Dol.
Here will be officers presently, bethink you
Of some course suddenly to 'scape the dock:
For thither you will come else. (Loud knocking.) Hark
you, thunder.
Sub.—You are a precious fiend!
Offi. (without.)—Open the door.
Face.—Dol, I am sorry for thee, i'faith; but hear'st thou?
It shall go hard but I will place thee somewhere:
Thou shalt have my letter to mistress Amo—
Dol.—Hang you!
Face.—Or madam Cæsarean.
Dol.—Pox upon you, rogue,
Would I had but time to beat thee!
Face.—Subtle,
Let's know where you set up next; I will send you
A customer now and then, for old acquaintance:
What new course have you?
Sub.—Rogue, I'll hang myself;
That I may walk a greater devil than thou,

And haunt thee in the flock-bed and the buttery (Exeunt.

SCENE III.—*An outer Room in the same*

Enter LOVEWIT *in the Spanish dress, with the Parson*

(*Loud knocking at the door*)

Love.—What do you mean, my masters?
Mam. (without.)—Open your door,
Cheaters, bawds, conjurers.
Offi. (without.)—Or we will break it open.
Love.—What warrant have you?
Offi. (without.)—Warrant enough, sir, doubt not,
If you'll not open it.
Love.—Is there an officer, there?
Offi. (without.)—Yes, two or three for failing.
Love.—Have but patience,
And I will open it straight.

Enter FACE, *as butler*

Face.—Sir, have you done?
Is it a marriage? perfect?
Love.—Yes, my brain.
Face.—Off with your ruff and cloak then; be yourself, sir.
Sur. (without.)—Down with the door.
Kas. (without.)—'Slight, ding it open.
Love. (opening the door.)—Hold,
Hold, gentlemen, what means this violence?

MAMMON, SURLY, KASTRIL, ANANIAS, TRIBULATION, *and* Officers, *rush in*

Mam.—Where is this collier?
Sur.—And my captain Face?
Mam.—These day owls.
Sur.—That are birding in men's purses.
Mam.—Madam suppository.
Kas.—Doxy, my suster.
Ana.—Locusts
Of the foul pit.
Tri.—Profane as Bel and the dragon.
Ana.—Worse than the grasshoppers, or the lice of Egypt.
Love.—Good gentlemen, hear me. Are you officers,
And cannot stay this violence?
1 Offi.—Keep the peace.

Love.—Gentlemen, what is the matter? whom do you seek?
Mam.—The chemical cozener.
Sur.—And the captain pander.
Kas.—The nun my suster.
Mam.—Madam Rabbi.
Ana.—Scorpions,
And caterpillars.
Love.—Fewer at once, I pray you.
2 Offi.—One after another, gentlemen, I charge you,
By virtue of my staff.
Ana.—They are the vessels
Of pride, lust, and the cart.
Love.—Good zeal, lie still
A little while.
Tri.—Peace, deacon Ananias.
Love.—The house is mine here, and the doors are open;
If there be any such persons as you seek for,
Use your authority, search on o' God's name.
I am but newly come to town, and finding
This tumult 'bout my door, to tell you true,
It somewhat mazed me; till my man, here, fearing
My more displeasure, told me had done
Somewhat an insolent part, let out my house
(Belike, presuming on my known aversion
From any air o' the town while there was sickness,)
To a doctor and a captain: who, what they are
Or where they be, he knows not.
Mam.—Are they gone?
Love.—You may go in and search, sir. (Mammon, Ana., and Trib. go in.) Here, I find
The enmpty walls worse than I left them, smoak'd.
A few crack'd pots, and glasses, and a furnace:
The ceiling fill'd with poesies of the candle,
And madam with a dildo writ o' the walls:
Only one gentlewoman, I met here,
That is within, that said she was a widow—
Kas.—Ay, that's my suster; I'll go thump her. Where is she? (Goes in.
Love.—And should have married a Spanish count, but he,
When he came to't, neglected her so grossly,
That I, a widower, am gone through with her.
Sur.—How! have I lost her then?
Love.—Were you the don, sir?
Good faith, now, she does blame you extremely, and says

You swore, and told her you had taken the pains
To dye your beard, and umbre o'er your face,
Borrowed a suit, and ruff, all for her love;
And then did nothing. What an oversight,
And want of putting forward, sir, was this!
Well fare an old harquebuzier, yet,
Could prime his powder, and give fire, and hit,
All in a twinkling!

Re-enter MAMMON

Mam.—The whole nest are fled!
Love.—What sort of birds were they?
Mam.—A kind of choughs,
Or thievish daws, sir, that have pick'd my purse
Of eight score and ten pounds within these five weeks,
Beside my first materials; and my goods,
That lie in the cellar, which I am glad they have left,
I may have home yet.
Love.—Think you so, sir?
Mam.—Ay.
Love.—By order of law, sir, but not otherwise.
Mam.—Not mine own stuff!
Love.—Sir, I can take no knowledge
That they are yours, but by public means.
If you can bring certificate that you were gull'd of them,
Or any formal writ out of a court,
That you did cozen your self, I will not hold them.
Mam.—I'll rather lose them.
Love.—That you shall not, sir,
By me, in troth: upon these terms, they are yours.
What! should they have been, sir, turn'd into gold, all?
Mam.—No,
I cannot tell—It may be they should—What then?
Love.—What a great loss in hope have you sustain'd!
Mam.—Not I, the commonwealth has.
Face.—Ay, he would have built
The city new; and made a ditch about it
Of silver, should have run with cream from Hogsden;
That, every Sunday, in Moorfields, the younkers,
And tits and tom-boys should have fed on, gratis.
Mam.—I will go mount a turnip-cart, and preach
The end of the world, within these two months. Surly,
What! in a dream?
Sur.—Must I needs cheat myself,

With that same foolish vice of honesty!
Come, let us go and hearken out the rogues:
That Face I'll mark for mine, if e'er I meet him.

Face.—If I can hear of him, sir, I'll bring you word,
Unto your lodging; for in troth, they were strangers
To me, I thought them honest as my self, sir.

(Exeunt Mam. and Sur.

Re-enter ANANIAS *and* TRIBULATION

Tri.—'Tis well, the saints shall not lose all yet. Go,
And get some carts—

Love.—For what, my zealous friends?

Ana.—To bear away the portion of the righteous
Out of this den of thieves.

Love.—What is that portion?

Ana.—The goods sometimes the orphan's, that the brethren
Bought with their silver pence.

Love.—What, those in the cellar,
The knight sir Mammon claims?

Ana.—I do defy
The wicked Mammon, so do all the brethern,
Thou profane man! I ask thee with what conscience
Thou canst advance that idol against us,
That have the seal? were not the shillings number'd
That made the pounds; were not the pounds told out,
Upon the second day of the fourth week,
In the eighth month, upon the table dormant,
The year of the last patience of the saints,
Six hundred and ten?

Love.—Mine earnest vehement botcher,
And deacon also, I cannot dispute with you:
But if you get you not away the sooner,
I shall confute you with a cudgel.

Ana.—Sir!

Tri.—Be patient, Ananias.

Ana.—I am strong,
And will stand up, well girt, against an host
That threaten Gad in exile.

Love.—I shall send you
To Amsterdam, to your cellar.

Ana.—I will pray there,
Against thy house: may dogs defile thy walls,
And wasps and hornets breed beneath thy roof,

This seat of falsehood, and this cave of cozenage!
(Exeunt Ana. and Trib.

Enter DRUGGER

Love.—Another too?
Drug.—Not I, sir, I am no brother.
Love. (beats him.)—Away, you Harry Nicholas! do you talk?
(Exit Drug.
Face.—No, this was Abel Drugger. Good sir, go. (To the Parson.
And satisfy him; tell him all is done:
He staid too long a washing of his face.
The doctor, he shall hear of him at West-chester,
And of the captain, tell him, at Yarmouth, or
Some good port-town else, lying for a wind.
(Exit Parson.
If you can get off angry child, now, sir—

Enter KASTRIL, *dragging in his sister*

Kas.—Come on, you ewe, you have match'd most sweetly, have you not?
Did not I say, I would never have you tupp'd
But by a dubb'd boy, to make you a lady-tom?
'Slight, you are a mammet! O, I could touse you, now.
Death, mun' you marry, with a pox!
Love.—You lie, boy;
As sound as you; and I'm aforehand with you.
Kas.—Anon!
Love.—Come, will you quarrel? I will feize you, sirrah;
Why do you not buckle to your tools?
Kas.—Od's light,
This is a fine old boy as e'er I saw!
Love.—What, do you change your copy now? proceed,
Here stands my dove: stoop at her, if you dare.
Kas.—'Slight, I must love him! I cannot choose, i'faith,
An I should be hang'd for't! Suster, I protest,
I honour thee for this match.
Love.—O, do you so, sir?
Kas.—Yes, an thou canst take tobacco and drink, old boy,
I'll give her five hundred pound more to her marriage,
Than her own state.
Love.—Fill a pipe full, Jeremy.
Face.—Yes; but go in and take it, sir.

Love.—We will—
I will be ruled by thee in any thing, Jeremy.
Kas.—'Slight, thou art not hide-bound, thou art a jovy boy!
Come, let us in, I pray thee, and take our whiffs.
Love.—Whiff in with your sister, brother boy. (Exeunt Kas. and Dame P.) That master
That had received such happiness by a servant,
In such a widow, and with so much wealth,
Were very ungrateful, if he would not be
A little indulgent to that servant's wit,
And help his fortune, though with some small strain
Of his own candour. (advancing.)—Therefore, gentlemen,
And kind spectators, if I have outstript
An old man's gravity, or strict canon, think
What a young wife and a good brain may do;
Stretch age's truth sometimes, and crack it too.
Speak for thy self, knave.
Face.—So I will, sir. (advancing to the front of the stage.) Gentlemen,
My part a little fell in this last scene,
Yet 'twas decorum. And though I am clean
Got off from Subtle, Surly, Mammon, Dol,
Hot Ananias, Dapper, Drugger, all
With whom I traded: yet I put my self
On you, that are my country: and this pelf
Which I have got, if you do quit me, rests
To feast you often, and invite new guests. (Exeunt.

ALL FOR LOVE

RESTORATION PLAYS

(John Dryden, English poet and dramatist, was born at Aldwinkle, 1631, the son of a Northamptonshire rector. Dryden was a voluminous dramatist during the greater part of his life, but much of his dramatic work is characterized by the gross immortality of his age. He later adopted blank verse, as in his best known play, "All for Love." Dryden began his career as a poet with his "Heroic Stanzas on the Death of Oliver Cromwell," following in 1660, with "Astroea Redux," a poem in celebration of the Restoration. One of his strongest poems was "Annus Mirabilis." The strong, vigorous English of these poems, their keen invective, and satirical quality, give him a very high rank amongst English poets. His "Essay on Dramatic Poetry," in 1668, is most valuable for its critical qualities and as a masterly piece of prose. He died in 1700.)

ALL FOR LOVE

OR THE WORLD WELL LOST

A TRAGEDY

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

THOMAS, EARL OF DANBY

Viscount Latimer, and Baron Osborne of Kiveton, in Yorkshire; Lord High Treasurer of England, one of His Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council, and Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter.

My lord,—The gratitude of poets is so troublesome a virtue to great men, that you are often in danger of your benefits: for you are threatened with some epistle, and not suffered to do good in quiet, or to compound for their silence whom you have obliged. Yet, I confess, I neither am nor ought to be surprised at this indulgence; for your lordship has the same right to favour poetry, which the great and noble have ever had—

Carmen amat, quisquis carmine digna gerit.

There is somewhat of a tie in nature betwixt those who are born for worthy actions, and those who can transmit them to posterity;

and though ours be much the inferior part, it comes at least within the verge of alliance; nor are we unprofitable members of the commonwealth, when we animate others to those virtues, which we copy and describe from you.

It is indeed their interest, who endeavour the subversion of governments, to discourage poets and historians; for the best which can happen to them, is to be forgotten. But such who, under kings, are the fathers of their country, and by a just and prudent ordering of affairs preserve it, have the same reason to cherish the chroniclers of their actions, as they have to lay up in safety the deeds and evidences of their estates; for such records are their undoubted titles to the love and reverence of after ages. Your lordship's administration has already taken up a considerable part of the English annals; and many of its most happy years are owing to it. His Majesty, the most knowing judge of men, and the best master, has acknowledged the ease and benefit he receives in the incomes of his treasury, which you found not only disordered, but exhausted. All things were in the confusion of a chaos, without form or method, if not reduced beyond it, even to annihilation; so that you had not only to separate the jarring elements, but (if that boldness of expression might be allowed me) to create them. Your enemies had so embroiled the management of your office, that they looked on your advancement as the instrument of your ruin. And as if the clogging of the revenue, and the confusion of accounts, which you found in your entrance, were not sufficient, they added their own weight of malice to the public calamity, by forestalling the credit which should cure it. Your friends on the other side were only capable of pitying, but not of aiding you; no further help or counsel was remaining to you, but what was founded on yourself; and that indeed was your security; for your diligence, your constancy, and your prudence, wrought most surely within, when they were not disturbed by any outward motion. The highest virtue is best to be trusted with itself; for assistance only can be given by a genius superior to that which it assists; and it is the noblest kind of debt, when we are only obliged to God and nature. This then, my lord, is your just commendation, that you have wrought out yourself a way to glory, by those very means that were designed for your destruction. You have not only restored but advanced the revenues of your master, without grievance to the subject; and, as if that were little yet, the debts of the exchequer, which lay heaviest both on the crown, and on private persons, have by your conduct been established in a certainty of satisfaction. An action so much the more great and honourable, because the case was without the ordinary relief of laws; above the hopes of the afflicted and beyond the narrowness of the treasury to redress, had it been managed by a less able hand. It is certainly the

happiest, and most unenvied part of all your fortune, to do good to many, while you do injury to none; to receive at once the prayers of the subject, and the praises of the prince; and, by the care of your conduct, to give him means of exerting the chiefest (if any be the chiefest) of his royal virtues, his distributive justice to the deserving, and his bounty and compassion to the wanting. The disposition of princes towards their people cannot be better discovered than in the choice of their ministers; who, like the animal spirits betwixt the soul and body, participate somewhat of both natures, and make the communication which is betwixt them. A king, who is just and moderate in his nature, who rules according to the laws, whom God has made happy by forming the temper of his soul to the constitution of his government, and who makes us happy, by assuming over us no other sovereignty than that wherein our welfare and liberty consists; a prince, I say, of so excellent a character, and so suitable to the wishes of all good men, could not better have conveyed himself into his people's apprehensions, than in your lordship's person; who so lively express the same virtues, that you seem not so much a copy, as an emanation of him. Moderation is doubtless an establishment of greatness; but there is a steadiness of temper which is likewise requisite in a minister of state; so equal a mixture of both virtues, that he may stand like an isthmus betwixt the two encroaching seas of arbitrary power, and lawless anarchy. The undertaking would be difficult to any but an extraordinary genius, to stand at the line, and to divide the limits; to pay what is due to the great representative of the nation, and neither to enhance, nor to yield up, the undoubted prerogatives of the crown. These, my lord, are the proper virtues of a noble Englishman, as indeed, they are properly English virtues; no people in the world being capable of using them, but we who have the happiness to be born under so equal, and so well-poised a government;—a government which has all the advantages of liberty beyond a commonwealth, and all the marks of kingly sovereignty, without the danger of a tyranny. Both my nature, as I am an Englishman, and my reason, as I am a man, have bred in me a loathing to that specious name of a republic; that mock appearance of a liberty, where all who have not part in the government, are slaves; and slaves they are of a viler note, than such as are subjects to an absolute dominion. For no Christian monarchy is so absolute, but it is circumscribed with laws; but when the executive power is in the law-makers, there is no further check upon them; and the people must suffer without a remedy, because they are oppressed by their representatives. If I must serve, the number of my masters, who were born my equals, would but add to the ignominy of my bondage. The nature of our government, above all others, is exactly suited both

to the situation of our country, and the temper of the natives; an island being more proper for commerce and for defence, than for extending its dominions on the Continent; for what the valour of its inhabitants might gain, by reason of its remoteness, and the casualties of the seas, it could not so easily preserve. And, therefore, neither the arbitrary power of One, in a monarchy, nor of Many, in a commonwealth, could make us greater than we are. It is true, that vaster and more frequent taxes might be gathered, when the consent of the people was not asked or needed; but this were only by conquering abroad, to be poor at home; and the examples of our neighbours teach us, that they are not always the happiest subjects, whose kings extend their dominions farthest. Since therefore we cannot win by an offensive war, at least a land war, the model of our government seems naturally contrived for the defensive part; and the consent of a people is easily obtained to contribute to that power which must protect it. *Felices nimium, bona si sua nôrint, Angligenæ!* And yet there are not wanting malcontents among us, who, surfeiting themselves on too much happiness, would persuade the people that they might be happier by a change. It was indeed the policy of their old forefather, when himself was fallen from the station of glory, to seduce mankind into the same rebellion with him, by telling him he might yet be freer than he was; that is more free than his nature would allow, or, if I may so say, than God could make him. We have already all the liberty which freeborn subjects can enjoy, and all beyond it is but licence. But if it be liberty of conscience which they pretend, the moderation of our church is such, that its practice extends not to the severity of persecution; and its discipline is withal so easy, that it allows more freedom to dissenters than any of the sects would allow to it. In the meantime, what right can be pretended by these men to attempt innovation in church or state? Who made them the trustees, or to speak a little nearer their own language, the keepers of the liberty of England? If their call be extraordinary, let them convince us by working miracles; for ordinary vocation they can have none, to disturb the government under which they were born, and which protects them. He who has often changed his party, and always has made his interest the rule of it, gives little evidence of his sincerity for the public good; it is manifest he changes but for himself, and takes the people for tools to work his fortune. Yet the experience of all ages might let him know, that they who trouble the waters first, have seldom the benefit of the fishing; as they who began the late rebellion enjoyed not the fruit of their undertaking, but were crushed themselves by the usurpation of their own instrument. Neither is it enough for them to answer, that they only intend a reformation of the government, but not the subversion of it: on such pretence all insurrections have

been founded; it is striking at the root of power, which is obedience. Every remonstrance of private men has the seed of treason in it; and discourses, which are couched in ambiguous terms, are therefore the more dangerous, because they do all the mischief of open sedition, yet are safe from the punishment of the laws. These, my lord, are considerations, which I should not pass so lightly over, had I room to manage them as they deserve; for no man can be so inconsiderable in a nation, as not to have a share in the welfare of it; and if he be a true Englishman, he must at the same time be fired with indignation, and revenge himself as he can on the disturbers of his country. And to whom could I more fitly apply myself than to your lordship, who have not only an inborn, but an hereditary loyalty? The memorable constancy and sufferings of your father, almost to the ruin of his estate, for the royal cause, were an earnest of that which such a parent and such an institution would produce in the person of a son. But so unhappy an occasion of manifesting your own zeal, in suffering for his present majesty, the providence of God, and the prudence of your administration, will, I hope, prevent; that, as your father's fortune waited on the unhappiness of his sovereign, so your own may participate of the better fate which attends his son. The relation which you have by alliance to the noble family of your lady, serves to confirm to you both this happy augury. For what can deserve a greater place in the English chronicle, than the loyalty and courage, the actions and death, of the general of an army, fighting for his prince and country? The honour and gallantry of the Earl of Lindsey is so illustrious a subject, that it is fit to adorn an heroic poem; for he was the proto-martyr of the cause, and the type of his unfortunate royal master.

Yet after all, my lord, if I may speak my thoughts, you are happy rather to us than to yourself; for the multiplicity, the cares, and the vexations of your employment, have betrayed you from yourself, and given you up into the possession of the public. You are robbed of your privacy and friends, and scarce any hour of your life you can call your own. Those, who envy your fortune, if they wanted not good-nature, might more justly pity it; and when they see you watched by a crowd of suitors, whose importunity it is impossible to avoid, would conclude, with reason, that you have lost much more in true content, than you have gained by dignity; and that a private gentleman is better attended by a single servant, than your lordship with so clamorous a train. Pardon me, my lord, if I speak like a philosopher on this subject; the fortune which makes a man uneasy, cannot make him happy; and a wise man must think himself uneasy, when few of his actions are in his choice.

This last consideration has brought me to another, and a very seasonable one for your relief; which is, that while I pity your want

of leisure, I have impertinently detained you so long a time. I have put off my own business, which was my dedication, till it is so late, that I am now ashamed to begin it; and therefore I will say nothing of the poem, which I present to you, because I know not if you are like to have an hour, which, with a good conscience, you may throw away in perusing it; and for the author, I have only to beg the continuance of your protection to him, who is, my lord, your lordship's most obliged, most humble, and most obedient servant,

JOHN DRYDEN.

PREFACE

The death of Antony and Cleopatra is a subject which has been treated by the greatest wits of our nation, after Shakespeare; and by all so variously, that their example has given me the confidence to try myself in this bow of Ulysses amongst the crowd of suitors; and, withal, to take my own measures, in aiming at the mark. I doubt not but the same motive has prevailed with all of us in this attempt; I mean the excellency of the moral. For the chief persons represented were famous patterns of unlawful love; and their end accordingly was unfortunate. All reasonable men have long since concluded, that the hero of the poem ought not to be a character of perfect virtue, for then he could not, without injustice, be made unhappy; nor yet altogether wicked, because he could not then be pitied. I have therefore steered the middle course; and have drawn the character of Antony as favourably as Plutarch, Appian, and Dion Cassius would give me leave; the like I have observed in Cleopatra. That which is wanting to work up the pity to a greater height, was not afforded me by the story; for the crimes of love, which they both committed, were not occasioned by any necessity, or fatal ignorance, but were wholly voluntary; since our passions are, or ought to be, within our power. The fabric of the play is regular enough, as to the inferior parts of it; and the unities of time, place, and action, more exactly observed, than perhaps the English theatre requires. Particularly, the action is so much one, that it is the only of the kind without episode, or underplot; every scene in the tragedy conducing to the main design, and every act concluding with a turn of it. The greatest error in the contrivance seems to be in the person of Octavia; for, though I might use the privilege of a poet, to introduce her into Alexandria, yet I had not enough considered, that the compassion she moved to herself and children was destructive to that which I reserved for Antony and Cleopatra; whose mutual love being founded upon vice, must lessen the favour of the audience to them, when virtue and innocence were oppressed by it. And, though I justified Antony in some measure, by making Octavia's departure to proceed wholly from herself; yet the force of the first machine still remained; and the dividing of pity, like the cutting of a river into many channels, abated the strength of the natural stream. But this is an objection which none of my critics have

urged against me; and therefore I might have let it pass, if I could have resolved to have been partial to myself. The faults my enemies have found are rather cavals concerning little and not essential decencies; which a master of the ceremonies may decide betwixt us. The French poets, I confess, are strict observers of these punctilios. They would not, for example, have suffered Cleopatra and Octavia to have met; or, if they had met, there must have only passed betwixt them some cold civilities, but no eagerness of repartee, for fear of offending against the greatness of their characters, and the modesty of their sex. This objection I foresaw, and at the same time contemned; for I judged it both natural and probable, that Octavia, proud of her new-gained conquest, would search out Cleopatra to triumph over her; and that Cleopatra, thus attacked, was not of a spirit to shun the encounter. And it is not unlikely, that two exasperated rivals should use such satire as I have put into their mouths; for, after all, though the one were a Roman, and the other a queen, they were both women. It is true, some actions, though natural, are not fit to be represented; and broad obscenities in words ought in good manners to be avoided: expressions therefore are a modest clothing of our thoughts, as breeches and petticoats are of our bodies. If I have kept myself within the bounds of modesty, all beyond, it is but nicety and affectation; which is no more but modesty depraved into a vice. They betray themselves who are too quick of apprehension in such cases, and leave all reasonable men to imagine worse of them, than of the poet.

Honest Montaigne goes yet further: *Nous ne sommes que cérémonie; la cérémonie nous emporte, et laissons la substance des choses. Nous nous tenons aux branches, et abandonnons le tronc et le corps. Nous avons appris aux dames de rougir, oyans seulement nommer ce qu'elles ne craignent aucunement à faire: Nous n' osons appeller à droit nos membres, et ne craignons pas de les employer à toute sorte de débauche. La cérémonie nous defend d'exprimer par paroles les choses licites et naturelles, et nous l'en croyons; la raison nous défend de n'en faire point d'illicites et mauvaises, et personne ne l'en croit.* My comfort is, that by this opinion my enemies are but sucking critics, who would fain be nibbling ere their teeth are come.

Yet, in this nicety of manners does the excellency of French poetry consist. Their heroes are the most civil people breathing; but their good breeding seldom extends to a word of sense; all their wit is in their ceremony; they want the genius which animates our stage; and therefore it is but necessary, when they cannot please, that they should take care not to offend. But as the civilest man in the company is commonly the dullest, so these authors, while they are afraid to make you laugh or cry, out of pure good manners make you sleep. They are so careful not to exasperate

a critic, that they never leave him any work; so busy with the broom, and make so clean a riddance that there is little left either for censure or for praise. For no part of a poem is worth our discommending, where the whole is insipid; as when we have once tasted of palled wine, we stay not to examine it glass by glass. But while they affect to shine in trifles, they are often careless in essentials. Thus, their Hippolytus is so scrupulous in point of decency, that he will rather expose himself to death, than accuse his stepmother to his father; and my critics I am sure will commend him for it. But we of grosser apprehensions are apt to think that this excess of generosity is not practicable, but with fools and madmen. This was good manners with a vengeance; and the audience is like to be much concerned at the misfortunes of this admirable hero. But take Hippolytus out of his poetic fit, and I suppose he would think it a wiser part to set the saddle on the right horse, and chose rather to live with the reputation of a plain-spoken, honest man, than to die with the infamy of an incestuous villain. In the meantime we may take notice, that where the poet ought to have preserved the character as it was delivered to us by antiquity, when he should have given us the picture of a rough young man, of the Amazonian strain, a jolly huntsman, and both by his profession and his early rising a mortal enemy to love, he has chosen to give him the turn of gallantry, sent him to travel from Athens to Paris, taught him to make love, and transformed the Hippolytus of Euripides into Monsieur Hippolyte. I should not have troubled myself thus far with French poets, but that I find our *Chedreux* critics wholly form their judgments by them. But for my part, I desire to be tried by the laws of my own country; for it seems unjust to me, that the French should prescribe here, till they have conquered. Our little sonneteers, who follow them, have too narrow souls to judge of poetry. Poets themselves are the most proper, though I conclude not the only critics. But till some genius, as universal as Aristotle, shall arise, one who can penetrate into all arts and sciences, without the practice of them, I shall think it reasonable, that the judgment of an artificer in his own art should be preferable to the opinion of another man; at least where he is not bribed by interest, or prejudiced by malice. And this, I suppose, is manifest by plain inductions. For, first, the crowd cannot be presumed to have more than a gross instinct, of what pleases or displeases them. Every man will grant me this; but then, by a particular kindness to himself, he draws his own stake first, and will be distinguished from the multitude, of which other men may think him one. But, if I come closer to those who are allowed for witty men, either by the advantage of their quality, or by common fame, and affirm that neither are they qualified to decide sovereignly con-

cerning poetry, I shall yet have a strong party of my opinion; for most of them severally will exclude the rest, either from the number of witty men, or at least of able judges. But here again they are all indulgent to themselves; and every one who believes himself a wit, that is, every man, will pretend at the same time to a right of judging. But to press it yet further, there are many witty men, but few poets; neither have all poets a taste of tragedy. And this is the rock on which they are daily splitting. Poetry, which is a picture of nature, must generally please; but it is not to be understood that all parts of it must please every man; therefore is not tragedy to be judged by a witty man, whose taste is only confined to comedy. Nor is every man, who loves tragedy, a sufficient judge of it; he must understand the excellences of it too, or he will only prove a blind admirer, not a critic. From hence it comes that so many satires on poets, and censures of their writings, fly abroad. Men of pleasant conversation (at least esteemed so), and endued with a trifling kind of fancy, perhaps helped out with some smattering of Latin, are ambitious to distinguish themselves from the herd of gentlemen, by their poetry—

> *Rarus enim fermè sensus communis in illâ*
> *Fortunâ.*

And is not this a wretched affectation, not to be contented with what fortune has done for them, and sit down quietly with their estates, but they must call their wits in question, and needlessly expose their nakedness to public view? Not considering that they are not to expect the same approbation from sober men, which they have found from their flatterers after the third bottle. If a little glittering in discourse has passed them on us for witty men, where was the necessity of undeceiving the world? Would a man who has an ill title to an estate, but yet is in possession of it; would he bring it of his own accord, to be tried at Westminster? We who write, if we want the talent, yet have the excuse that we do it for a poor subsistence; but what can be urged in their defence, who, not having the vocation of poverty to scribble, out of mere wantonness take pains to make themselves ridiculous? Horace was certainly in the right where he said, "That no man is satisfied with his own condition." A poet is not pleased, because he is not rich; and the rich are discontented, because the poets will not admit them of their number. Thus the case is hard with writers. If they succeed not, they must starve; and if they do, some malicious satire is prepared to level them, for daring to please without their leave. But while they are so eager to destroy the fame of others, their ambition is manifest in their concernment; some poem of their own is to be

produced, and the slaves are to be laid flat with their faces on the ground, that the monarch may appear in the greater majesty.

Dionysius and Nero had the same longings, but with all their power they could never bring their business well about. 'Tis true, they proclaimed themselves poets by sound of trumpet; and poets they were, upon pain of death to any man who durst call them otherwise. The audience had a fine time on't, you may imagine; they sat in a bodily fear, and looked as demurely as they could: for it was a hanging matter to laugh unseasonably; and the tyrants were suspicious, as they had reason, that their subjects had them in the wind; so, every man, in his own defense, set as good a face upon the business as he could. It was known beforehand that the monarchs were to be crowned laureates; but when the show was over, and an honest man was suffered to depart quietly, he took out his laughter which he had stifled, with a firm resolution never more to see an emperor's play, though he had been ten years a-making it. In the meantime the true poets were they who made the best markets: for they had wit enough to yield the prize with a good grace, and not contend with him who had thirty legions. They were sure to be rewarded, if they confessed themselves bad writers, and that was somewhat better than to be martyrs for their reputation. Lucan's example was enough to teach them manners; and after he was put to death, for overcoming Nero, the emperor carried it without dispute for the best poet in his dominions. No man was ambitious of that grinning honour; for if he heard the malicious trumpeter proclaiming his name before his betters, he knew there was but one way with him. Mæcenas took another course, and we know he was more than a great man, for he was witty too: but finding himself far gone in poetry, which Seneca assures us was not his talent, he thought it his best way to be well with Virgil and with Horace; that at least he might be a poet at the second hand; and we see how happily it has succeeded with him; for his own bad poetry is forgotten, and their panegyrics of him still remain. But they who should be our patrons are for no such expensive ways to fame; they have much of the poetry of Mæcenas, but little of his liberality. They are for persecuting Horace and Virgil, in the persons of their successors; for such is every man who has any part of their soul and fire, though in a less degree. Some of their little zanies yet go further; for they are persecutors even of Horace himself, as far as they are able, by their ignorant and vile imitations of him; by making an unjust use of his authority, and turning his artillery against his friends. But how would he disdain to be copied by such hands! I dare answer for him, he would be more uneasy in their company, than he was with Crispinus, their forefather, in the Holy Way;

and would no more have allowed them a place amongst the critics, than he would Demetrius the mimic, and Tigellius the buffoon;

Discipulorum inter jubco plorare cathedras.
———Demetri, teque, Tigelli,

With what scorn would he look down on such miserable translators, who make doggerel of his Latin, mistake his meaning, misapply his censures, and often contradict their own? He is fixed as a landmark to set out the bounds of poetry—

————Saxum antiquum, ingens,—
Limes agro positus, litem ut discerneret arvis.

But other arms than theirs, and other sinews are required, to raise the weight of such an author; and when they would toss him against enemies—

Genua labant, gelidus concrevit frigore sanguis.
Tum lapis ipse viri, vacuum per inane volatus,
Nec spatium evasit totum, nec pertulit ictum.

For my part, I would wish no other revenge, either for myself, or the rest of the poets, from this rhyming judge of the twelve-penny gallery, this legitimate son of Sternhold, than that he would subscribe his name to his censure, or (not to tax him beyond his learning) set his mark. For, should he own himself publicly, and come from behind the lion's skin, they whom he condemns would be thankful to him, they whom he praises would choose to be condemned; and the magistrates, whom he has elected, would modestly withdraw from their employment, to avoid the scandal of his nomination. The sharpness of his satire, next to himself, falls most heavily on his friends, and they ought never to forgive him for commending them perpetually the wrong way, and sometimes by contraries. If he have a friend, whose hastiness in writing is his greatest fault, Horace would have taught him to have minced the matter, and to have called it readiness of thought, and a flowing fancy: for friendship will allow a man to christen an imperfection by the name of some neighbour virtue—

Vellem in amicitiâ sic erraremus; et isti
Errori nomen virtus posuisset honestum.

But he would never have allowed him to have called a slow man hasty, or a hasty writer a slow drudge, as Juvenal explains it—

————Canibus pigris, scabieque vestustâ
Lævibus, et siccæ lambentibus ora lucernæ,

Nomen erit, Pardus, Tigris, Leo; si quid adhuc est
Quod fremit in terris violentius.

Yet Lucretius laughs at a foolish lover, even for excusing the imperfections of his mistress—

Nigra μελίχροος est, immunda et fœtida ἄκοσμος.
Balba loqui non quit, τραυλίζει; muta pudens est, etc.

But to drive it *ad Æthiopem cygnum* is not to be endured. I leave him to interpret this by the benefit of his French version on the other side, and without further considering him, than I have the rest of my illiterate censors, whom I have disdained to answer, because they are not qualified for judges. It remains that I acquaint the reader, that I have endeavoured in this play to follow the practice of the ancients, who, as Mr. Rymer has judiciously observed, are and ought to be our masters. Horace likewise gives it for a rule in his art of poetry—

———*Vos exemplaria Græca*
Nocturnâ versate manu, versate diurnâ.

Yet, though their models are regular, they are too little for English tragedy; which requires to be built in a larger compass. I could give an instance in the *Œdipus Tyrannus,* which was the masterpiece of Sophocles; but I reserve it for a more fit occasion, which I hope to have hereafter. In my style, I have professed to imitate the divine Shakespeare; which that I might perform more freely, I have disencumbered myself from rhyme. Not that I condemn my former way, but that this is more proper to my present purpose. I hope I need not to explain myself, that I have not copied my author servilely. Words and phrases must of necessity receive a change in succeeding ages; but it is almost a miracle that much of his language remains so pure; and that he who began dramatic poetry amongst us, untaught by any, and as Ben Jonson tells us, without learning, should by the force of his own genius perform so much, that in a manner he has left no praise for any who come after him. The occasion is fair, and the subject would be pleasant to handle the difference of styles betwixt him and Fletcher, and wherein, and how far they are both to be imitated. But since I must not be over-confident of my own performance after him, it will be prudence in me to be silent. Yet, I hope, I may affirm, and without vanity, that, by imitating him, I have excelled myself throughout the play; and particularly, that I prefer the scene betwixt Antony and Ventidius in the first act, to anything which I have written in this kind.

PROLOGUE

What flocks of critics hover here to-day,
As vultures wait on armies for their prey,
All gaping for the carcase of a play!
With croaking notes they bode some dire event,
And follow dying poets by the scent.
Ours gives himself for gone; y' have watched your time:
He fights this day unarmed,—without his rhyme;—
And brings a tale which often has been told;
As sad as Dido's; and almost as old.
His hero, whom you wits his bully call,
Bates of his mettle, and scarce rants at all:
He's somewhat lewd; but a well-meaning mind;
Weeps much; fights little; but is wond'rous kind.
In short, a pattern, and companion fit,
For all the keeping Tonies of the pit.
I could name more: a wife, and mistress too;
Both (to be plain) too good for most of you:
The wife well-natured, and the mistress true.
Now, poets, if your fame has been his care,
Allow him all the candour you can spare.
A brave man scorns to quarrel once a-day;
Like Hectors in at every petty fray.
Let those find fault whose wit's so very small,
They've need to show that they can think at all;
Errors, like straws, upon the surface flow;
He who would search for pearls, must dive below.
Fops may have leave to level all they can;
As pigmies would be glad to lop a man.
Half-wits are fleas; so little and so light,
We scarce could know they live, but that they bite.
But, as the rich, when tired with daily feasts,
For change, become their next poor tenant's guests:
Drink hearty draughts of ale from plain brown bowls,
And snatch the homely rasher from the coals:
So you, retiring from much better cheer,
For once, may venture to do penance here.
And since that plenteous autumn now is past,

Whose grapes and peaches have indulged their taste,
Take in good part, from our poor poet's board,
Such reveled fruits as winter can afford.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Mark Antony.
Ventidius, his General.
Dolabella, his Friend.
Alexas, the Queen's Eunuch.
Serapion, Priest of Isis.
Myris, another Priest.

Servants to Antony.
Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt.
Octavia, Antony's Wife.
Charmion, Iras, } Cleopatra's Maids.
Antony's two little Daughters.

Scene.—Alexandria.

ACT I

SCENE I.—*The Temple of Isis*

Enter SERAPION, MYRIS, Priests of Isis

Serap.—Portents and prodigies have grown so frequent,
That they have lost their name. Our fruitful Nile
Flowed ere the wonted season, with a torrent
So unexpected, and so wondrous fierce,
That the wild deluge overtook the haste
Even of the hinds that watched it: Men and beasts
Were borne above the tops of trees, that grew
On the utmost margin of the water-mark.
Then, with so swift an ebb the flood drove backward,
It slipt from underneath the scaly herd:
Here monstrous phocæ panted on the shore;
Forsaken dolphins there with their broad tails,
Lay lashing the departing waves: hard by them,
Sea horses floundering in the slimy mud,
Tossed up their heads, and dashed the ooze about them.

Enter ALEXAS *behind them*

Myr.—Avert these omens, Heaven!
Serap.—Last night, between the hours of twelve and one,
In a lone aisle of the temple while I walked,
A whirlwind rose, that, with a violent blast,
Shook all the dome: the doors around me clapt;
The iron wicket, that defends the vault,
Where the long race of Ptolemies is laid,
Burst open, and disclosed the mighty dead.

From out each monument, in order placed,
An armed ghost starts up: the boy-king last
Reared his inglorious head. A peal of groans
Then followed, and a lamentable voice
Cried, Egypt is no more! My blood ran back,
My shaking knees against each other knocked;
On the cold pavement down I fell entranced,
And so unfinished left the horrid scene.

Alex.—And dreamed you this? or did invent the story.
(Showing himself.
To frighten our Egyptian boys withal,
And train them up, betimes, in fear of priesthood?

Serap.—My lord, I saw you not,
Nor meant my words should reach your ears; but what
I uttered was most true.

Alex.—A foolish dream,
Bred from the fumes of indigested feasts,
And holy luxury.

Serap.—I know my duty:
This goes no further.

Alex.—'Tis not fit it should;
Nor would the times now bear it, were it true.
All southern, from yon hills, the Roman camp
Hangs o'er us black and threatening, like a storm
Just breaking on our heads.

Serap.—Our faint Egyptians pray for Antony;
But in their servile hearts they own Octavius.

Myr.—Why then does Antony dream out his hours,
And tempts not fortune for a noble day,
Which might redeem what Actium lost?

Alex.—He thinks 'tis past recovery.

Serap.—Yet the foe
Seems not to press the siege.

Alex.—Oh, there's the wonder.
Mæcenas and Agrippa, who can most
With Cæsar, are his foes. His wife Octavia,
Driven from his house, solicits her revenge;
And Dolabella, who was once his friend,
Upon some private grudge, now seeks his ruin:
Yet still war seems on either side to sleep.

Serap.—'Tis strange that Antony, for some days past,
Has not beheld the face of Cleopatra;
But here, in Isis' temple, lives retired,
And makes his heart a prey to black despair.

Alex.—'Tis true; and we much fear he hopes by absence

To cure his mind of love.

Serap.—If he be vanquished,
Or makes his peace, Egypt is doomed to be
A Roman province; and our plenteous harvests
Must then redeem the scarceness of their soil.
While Antony stood firm, our Alexandria
Rivalled proud Rome (dominion's other seat),
And Fortune striding, like a vast Colossus,
Could fix an equal foot of empire here.

Alex.—Had I my wish, these tyrants of all nature,
Who lord it o'er mankind, should perish,—perish,
Each by the other's sword; but, since our will
Is lamely followed by our power, we must
Depend on one; with him to rise or fall.

Serap.—How stands the queen affected?

Alex.—Oh, she dotes,
She dotes, Serapion, on this vanquished man,
And winds herself about his mighty ruins;
Whom would she yet forsake, yet yield him up,
This hunted prey, to his pursuer's hands,
She might preserve us all: but 'tis in vain—
This changes my designs, this blasts my counsels,
And makes me use all means to keep him here,
Whom I could wish divided from her arms,
Far as the earth's deep centre. Well, you know
The state of things; no more of your ill omens
And black prognostics; labour to confirm
The people's hearts.

Enter VENTIDIUS, *talking aside with a* Gentleman *of* ANTONY'S

Serap.—These Romans will o'erhear us.
But, who's that stranger? By his warlike port,
His fierce demeanour, and erected look,
He's of no vulgar note.

Alex.—Oh, 'tis Ventidius,
Our emperor's great lieutenant in the East,
Who first showed Rome that Parthia could be conquered.
When Antony returned from Syria last,
He left this man to guard the Roman frontiers.

Serap.—You seem to know him well.

Alex.—Too well. I saw him at Cilicia first,
When Cleopatra there met Antony:
A mortal foe he was to us, and Egypt.
But,—let me witness to the worth I hate,—
A braver Roman never drew a sword;

Firm to his prince, but as a friend, not slave.
He ne'er was of his pleasures; but presides
O'er all his cooler hours, and morning counsels:
In short the plainness, fierceness, rugged virtue,
Of an old true-stampt Roman lives in him.
His coming bodes I know not what of ill
To our affairs. Withdraw to mark him better;
And I'll acquaint you why I sought you here,
And what's our present work.
(They withdraw to a corner of the stage; and VENTIDIUS, *with the other, comes forward to the front*

Vent.—Not see him, say you?
I say, I must, and will.
Gent.—He has commanded,
On pain of death, none should approach his presence.
Vent.—I bring him news will raise his drooping spirits,
Give him new life.
Gent.—He sees not Cleopatra.
Vent.—Would he had never seen her!
Gent.—He eats not, drinks not, sleeps not, has no use
Of anything, but thought; or if he talks,
'Tis to himself, and then 'tis perfect raving:
Then he defies the world, and bids it pass;
Sometimes he gnaws his lip, and curses loud
The boy Octavius; then he draws his mouth
Into a scornful smile, and cries, "Take all,
The world's not worth my care."
Vent.—Just, just his nature.
Virtue's his path; but sometimes 'tis too narrow
For his vast soul; and then he starts out wide,
And bounds into a vice, that bears him far
From his first course, and plunges him in ills:
But, when his danger makes him find his fault,
Quick to observe, and full of sharp remorse,
He censures eagerly his own misdeeds,
Judging himself with malice to himself,
And not forgiving what as man he did,
Because his other parts are more than man.—
He must not thus be lost.
(ALEXAS *and the* Priests *come forward.*
Alex.—You have your full instructions, now advance:
Proclaim your orders loudly.
Serap.—Romans, Egyptians, hear the queen's command.
Thus Cleopatra bids: Let labour cease;
To pomp and triumphs give this happy day.

That gave the world a lord: 'tis Antony's.
Live, Antony; and Cleopatra live!
Be this the general voice sent up to heaven,
And every public place repeat this echo.

Vent.—Fine pageantry! (Aside.

Serap.—Set out before your doors
The images of all your sleeping fathers,
With laurels crowned; with laurels wreathe your posts,
And strew with flowers the pavement; let the priests
Do present sacrifice; pour out the wine,
And call the gods to join with you in gladness.

Vent.—Curse on the tongue that bids this general joy!
Can they be friends of Antony, who revel
When Antony's in danger? Hide, for shame,
You Romans, your great grandsires' images,
For fear their souls should animate their marbles,
To blush at their degenerate progeny.

Alex.—A love, which knows no bounds, to Antony,
Would mark the day with honours, when all heaven
Laboured for him, when each propitious star
Stood wakeful in his orb, to watch that hour,
And shed his better influence. Her own birthday
Our queen neglected like a vulgar fate
That passed obscurely by.

Vent.—Would it had slept,
Divided far from this; till some remote
And future age had called it out, to ruin
Some other prince, not him!

Alex.—Your emperor,
Though grown unkind, would be more gentle, than
To upbraid my queen for loving him too well.

Vent.—Does the mute sacrifice upbraid the priest?
He knows him not his executioner.
Oh, she has decked his ruin with her love,
Led him in golden bands to gaudy slaughter,
And made perdition pleasing: She has left him
The blank of what he was.
I tell thee, eunuch, she has quite unmanned him.
Can any Roman see, and know him now,
Thus altered from the lord of half mankind,
Unbent, unsinewed, made a woman's toy,
Shrunk from the vast extent of all his honours,
And crampt within a corner of the world?
O Antony!
Thou bravest soldier, and thou best of friends!

Bounteous as nature; next to nature's God!
Couldst thou but make new worlds, so wouldst thou give them,
As bounty were thy being! rough in battle,
As the first Romans when they went to war;
Yet after victory more pitiful
Than all their praying virgins left at home!

Alex.—Would you could add, to those more shining virtues,
His truth to her who loves him.

Vent.—Would I could not!
But wherefore waste I precious hours with thee!
Thou art her darling mischief, her chief engine,
Antony's other fate. Go, tell thy queen,
Ventidius is arrived, to end her charms.
Let your Egyptian timbrels play alone,
Nor mix effeminate sounds with Roman trumpets.
You dare not fight for Antony; go pray
And keep your cowards' holiday in temples.

(Exeunt Alexas, Serapion.

Re-enter the Gentleman *of* M. Antony

2 Gent.—The emperor approaches, and commands,
On pain of death, that none presume to stay.

1 Gent.—I dare not disobey him. (Going out with the other.

Vent.—Well, I dare.
But I'll observe him first unseen, and find
Which way his humour drives: The rest I'll venture.

(Withdraws.

Enter Antony, *walking with a disturbed motion before he speaks*

Ant.—They tell me, 'tis my birthday, and I'll keep it
With double pomp of sadness.
'Tis what the day deserves, which gave me breath.
Why was I raised the meteor of the world,
Hung in the skies, and blazing as I travelled,
Till all my fires were spent; and then cast downward,
To be trod out by Cæsar?

Vent. (aside).—On my soul,
'Tis mournful, wondrous mournful!

Ant.—Count thy gains.
Now, Antony, wouldst thou be born for this?
Glutton of fortune, thy devouring youth
Has starved thy wanting age.

Vent.—How sorrow shakes him! (Aside.
So, now the tempest tears him up by the roots.

And on the ground extends the noble ruin.
(Antony having thrown himself down.
Lie there, thou shadow of an emperor;
The place thou pressest on thy mother earth
Is all thy empire now: now it contains thee;
Some few days hence, and then 'twill be too large,
When thou'rt contracted in thy narrow urn,
Shrunk to a few cold ashes; then Octavia
(For Cleopatra will not live to see it),
Octavia then will have thee all her own,
And bear thee in her widowed hand to Cæsar;
Cæsar will weep, the crocodile will weep,
To see his rival of the universe
Lie still and peaceful there. I'll think no more on't.

Ant.—Give me some music: look that it be sad:
I'll soothe my melancholy, till I swell,
And burst myself with sighing.— (Soft music.
'Tis somewhat to my humour: stay, I fancy
I'm now turned wild, a commoner of nature;
Of all forsaken, and forsaking all;
Live in a shady forest's sylvan scene,
Stretched at my length beneath some blasted oak,
I lean my head upon the mossy bark,
And look just of a piece as I grew from it;
My uncombed locks, matted like mistletoe,
Hang o'er my hoary face; a murmuring brook
Runs at my foot.

Vent.—Methinks I fancy
Myself there too.

Ant.—The herd come jumping by me,
And, fearless, quench their thirst, while I look on,
And take me for their fellow-citizen.
More of this image, more; it lulls my thoughts.
(Soft music again.

Vent.—I must disturb him; I can hold no longer.
(Stands before him.

Ant. (starting up.)—Art thou Ventidius?

Vent.—Are you Antony?
I'm liker what I was, than you to him
I left you last.

Ant.—I'm angry.

Vent.—So am I.

Ant.—I would be private: leave me.

Vent.—Sir, I love you,
And therefore will not leave you.

Ant.—Will not leave me!
Where have you learnt that answer? Who am I?
Vent.—My emperor; the man I love next Heaven:
If I said more, I think 'twere scarce a sin:
You're all that's good, and god-like.
Ant.—All that's wretched.
You will not leave me then?
Vent.—'Twas too presuming
To say I would not; but I dare not leave you:
And, 'tis unkind in you to chide me hence
So soon, when I so far have come to see you.
Ant.—Now thou hast seen me, art thou satisfied?
For, if a friend, thou hast beheld enough;
And, if a foe, too much.
Vent.—Look, emperor, this is no common dew. (Weeping.
I have not wept this forty years; but now
My mother comes afresh into my eyes;
I cannot help her softness.
Ant.—By heaven, he weeps! poor good old man, he weeps!
The big round drops course one another down
The furrows of his cheeks.—Stop them, Ventidius,
Or I shall blush to death: they set my shame,
That caused them, full before me.
Vent.—I'll do my best.
Ant.—Sure there's contagion in the tears of friends:
See, I have caught it too. Believe me, 'tis not
For my own griefs, but thine.—Nay, father!
Vent.—Emperor.
Ant.—Emperor! Why, that's the style of victory;
The conqu'ring soldier, red with unfelt wounds,
Salutes his general so: but never more
Shall that sound reach my ears.
Vent.—I warrant you.
Ant.—Actium, Actium! Oh!——
Vent.—It sits too near you.
Ant.—Here, here it lies; a lump of lead by day,
And, in my short, distracted, nightly slumbers,
The hag that rides my dreams.——
Vent.—Out with it; give it vent.
Ant.—Urge not my shame.
I lost a battle,——
Vent.—So has Julius done.
Ant.—Thou favour'st me, and speak'st not half thou think'st;
For Julius fought it out, and lost it fairly:
But Antony——

Vent.—Nay, stop not.
Ant.—Antony,—
Well, thou wilt have it—like a coward, fled,
Fled while his soldiers fought; fled first, Ventidius.
Thou long'st to curse me, and I give thee leave.
I know thou cam'st prepared to rail.
Vent.—I did.
Ant.—I'll help thee.—I have been a man, Ventidius.
Vent.—Yes, and a brave one; but——
Ant.—I know thy meaning.
But I have lost my reason, have disgraced
The name of soldier, with inglorious ease.
In the full vintage of my flowing honours,
Sat still, and saw it prest by other hands.
Fortune came smiling to my youth, and wooed it,
And purple greatness met my ripened years.
When first I came to empire, I was borne
On tides of people, crowding to my triumphs;
The wish of nations, and the willing world
Received me as its pledge of future peace;
I was so great, so happy, so beloved,
Fate could not ruin me; till I took pains,
And worked against my fortune, chid her from me,
And turned her loose; yet still she came again.
My careless days, and my luxurious nights,
At length have wearied her, and now she's gone,
Gone, gone, divorced for ever. Help me, soldier,
To curse this madman, this industrious fool,
Who laboured to be wretched: Pr'ythee, curse me.
Vent.—No.
Ant.—Why?
Vent.—You are too sensible already
Of what you've done, too conscious of your failings;
And, like a scorpion, whipt by others first
To fury, sting yourself in mad revenge.
I would bring balm, and pour it in your wounds,
Cure your distempered mind, and heal your fortunes.
Ant.—I know thou would'st.
Vent.—I will.
Ant.—Ha, ha, ha, ha!
Vent.—You laugh.
Ant.—I do, to see officious love
Give cordials to the dead.
Vent.—You would be lost, then?
Ant.—I am.

Vent.—I say you are not. Try your fortune.
Ant.—I have, to the utmost. Dost thou think me desperate,
Without just cause? No, when I found all lost
Beyond repair, I hid me from the world,
And learnt to scorn it here; which now I do
So heartily, I think it is not worth
The cost of keeping.
Vent.—Cæsar think not so;
He'll thank you for the gift he could not take.
You would be killed like Tully, would you? do,
Hold out your throat to Cæsar, and die tamely.
Ant.—No, I can kill myself; and so resolve.
Vent.—I can die with you too, when time shall serve;
But fortune calls upon us now to live,
To fight, to conquer.
Ant.—Sure thou dream'st, Ventidius.
Vent.—No; 'tis you dream; you sleep away your hours
In desperate sloth, miscalled philosophy.
Up, up, for honour's sake; twelve legions wait you,
And long to call you chief: By painful journeys
I led them, patient both of heat and hunger,
Down from the Parthian marches to the Nile.
'Twill do you good to see their sunburnt faces,
Their scarred cheeks, and chopt hands: there's virtue in them.
They'll sell those mangled limbs at dearer rates
Than you trim bands can buy.
Ant.—Where left you them?
Vent.—I said in Lower Syria.
Ant.—Bring them hither;
There may be life in these.
Vent.—They will not come.
Ant.—Why didst thou mock my hopes with promised aids,
To double my despair? They're mutinous.
Vent.—Most firm and loyal.
Ant.—Yet they will not march
To succour me. O trifler!
Vent.—They petition
You would make haste to head them.
Ant.—I'm besieged.
Vent.—There's but one way shut up: How came I hither?
Ant.—I will not stir.
Vent.—They would perhaps desire
A better reason.
Ant.—I have never used

My soldiers to demand a reason of
My actions. Why did they refuse to march?
Vent.—They said they would not fight for Cleopatra.
Ant.—What was't they said?
Vent.—They said they would not fight for Cleopatra.
Why should they fight indeed, to make her conquer,
And make you more a slave? to gain you kingdoms,
Which, for a kiss, at your next midnight feast,
You'll sell to her? Then she new-names her jewels,
And calls this diamond such or such a tax;
Each pendant in her ear shall be a province.
Ant.—Ventidius, I allow your tongue free licence
On all my other faults: but, on your life,
No word of Cleopatra: she deserves
More worlds than I can lose.
Vent.—Behold, you Powers,
To whom you have intrusted humankind!
See Europe, Afric, Asia, put in balance,
And all weighed down by one light, worthless woman!
I think the gods are Antonies, and give,
Like prodigals, this nether world away
To none but wasteful hands.
Ant.—You grow presumptuous.
Vent.—I take the privilege of plain love to speak.
Ant.—Plain love! plain arrogance, plain insolence!
Thy men are cowards; thou, an envious traitor;
Who, under seeming honesty, hast vented
The burden of thy rank, o'erflowing gall.
O that thou wert my equal; great in arms
As the first Cæsar was, that I might kill thee
Without a stain to honour!
Vent.—You may kill me;
You have done more already,—called me traitor.
Ant.—Art thou not one?
Vent.—For showing you yourself,
Which none else durst have done? but had I been
That name, which I disdain to speak again,
I needed not have sought your abject fortunes,
Come to partake your fate, to die with you.
What hindered me to have led my conquering eagles
To fill Octavius' bands? I could have been
A traitor then, a glorious, happy traitor,
And not have been so called.
Ant.—Forgive me, soldier;
I've been too passionate.

Vent.—You thought me false;
Thought my old age betrayed you: Kill me, sir,
Pray, kill me; yet you need not, your unkindness
Has left your sword no work.
Ant.—I did not think so;
I said it in my rage: Pr'ythee, forgive me.
Why didst thou tempt my anger, by discovery
Of what I would not hear?
Vent.—No prince but you
Could merit that sincerity I used,
Nor durst another man have ventured it;
But you, ere love misled your wandering eyes,
Were sure the chief and best of human race,
Framed in the very pride and boast of nature;
So perfect, that the gods, who formed you, wondered
At their own skill, and cried—A lucky hit
Has mended our design. Their envy hindered,
Else you had been immortal, and a pattern,
When Heaven would work for ostentation's sake
To copy out again.
Ant.—But Cleopatra—
Go on; for I can bear it now.
Vent.—No more.
Ant.—Thou dar'st not trust my passion, but thou may'st;
Thou only lov'st, the rest have flattered me.
Vent.—Heaven's blessing on your heart for that kind word!
May I believe you love me? Speak again.
Ant.—Indeed I do. Speak this, and this, and this.
(Hugging him.
Thy praises were unjust; but, I'll deserve them,
And yet mend all. Do with me what thou wilt;
Lead me to victory! thou know'st the way.
Vent.—And, will you leave this——
Ant.—Pr'ythee, do not curse her,
And I will leave her; though, Heaven knows, I love
Beyond life, conquest, empire, all, but honour;
But I will leave her.
Vent.—That's my royal master;
And, shall we fight?
Ant.—I warrant thee, old soldier.
Thou shalt behold me once again in iron;
And at the head of our old troops, that beat
The Parthians, cry aloud—Come, follow me!
Vent.—Oh, now I hear my emperor! in that word
Octavius fell. Gods, let me see that day,

And, if I have ten years behind, take all:
I'll thank you for the exchange.
Ant.—O Cleopatra!
Vent.—Again?
Ant.—I've done: In that last sigh she went.
Cæsar shall know what 'tis to force a lover
From all he holds most dear.
Vent.—Methinks, you breathe
Another soul: Your looks are more divine;
You speak a hero, and you move a god.
Ant.—Oh, thou hast fired me; my soul's up in arms,
And mans each part about me: Once again,
That noble eagerness of fight has seized me;
That eagerness with which I darted upward
To Cassius' camp: In vain the steepy hill
Opposed my way; in vain a war of spears
Sung round my head, and planted on my shield;
I won the trenches, while my foremost men
Lagged on the plain below.
Vent.—Ye gods, ye gods,
For such another honour!
Ant.—Come on, my soldier!
Our hearts and arms are still the same: I long
Once more to meet our foes; that thou and I,
Like Time and Death, marching before our troops,
May taste fate to them; mow them out a passage,
And, entering where the foremost squadrons yield,
Begin the noble harvest of the field. (Exeunt.

ACT II

SCENE I

Enter CLEOPATRA, IRAS, *and* ALEXAS

Cleo.—What shall I do, or whither shall I turn?
Ventidius has o'ercome, and he will go.
Alex.—He goes to fight for you.
Cleo.—Then he would see me, ere he went to fight:
Flatter me not: If once he goes, he's lost,
And all my hopes destroyed.
Alex.—Does this weak passion
Become a mighty queen?
Cleo.—I am no queen:
Is this to be a queen, to be besieged
By yon insulting Roman, and to wait

Each hour the victor's chain? These ills are small:
For Antony is lost, and I can mourn
For nothing else but him. Now come, Octavius,
I have no more to lose! prepare thy bands;
I'm fit to be a captive: Antony
Has taught my mind the fortune of a slave.

Iras.—Call reason to assist you.

Cleo.—I have none,
And none would have: My love's a noble madness,
Which shows the cause deserved it. Moderate sorrow
Fits vulgar love, and for a vulgar man:
But I have loved with such transcendent passion,
I soared, at first, quite out of reason's view,
And now am lost above it. No, I'm proud
'Tis thus: Would Antony could see me now
Think you he would not sigh, though he must leave me?
Sure he would sigh; for he is noble-natured,
And bears a tender heart: I know him well.
Ah, no, I know him not; I knew him once,
But now 'tis past.

Iras.—Let it be past with you:
Forget him, madam.

Cleo.—Never, never, Iras.
He once was mine; and once, though now 'tis gone,
Leaves a faint image of possession still.

Alex.—Think him inconstant, cruel, and ungrateful.

Cleo.—I cannot: If I could, those thoughts were vain.
Faithless, ungrateful, cruel, though he be,
I still must love him.

Enter CHARMION

Now, what news, my Charmion?
Will he be kind? and will he not forsake me?
Am I to live, or die?—nay, do I live?
Or am I dead? for when he gave his answer,
Fate took the word, and then I lived or died.

Char.—I found him, madam——

Cleo.—A long speech, preparing?
If thou bring'st comfort, haste, and give it me
For never was more need.

Iras.—I know he loves you.

Cleo.—Had he been kind, her eyes had told me so,
Before her tongue could speak it: Now she studies,
To soften what he said; but give me death.

Just as he sent it, Charmion, undisguised,
And in the words he spoke.

Char.—I found him, then,
Encompassed round, I think, with iron statues;
So mute, so motionless his soldiers stood,
While awfully he cast his eyes about,
And every leader's hopes or fears surveyed:
Methought he looked resolved, and yet not pleased.
When he beheld me struggling in the crowd,
He blushed, and bade make way.

Alex.—There's comfort yet.

Char.—Ventidius fixed his eyes upon my passage
Severely, as he meant to frown me back,
And sullenly gave place: I told my message,
Just as you gave it, broken and disordered;
I numbered in it all your sighs and tears,
And while I moved your pitiful request,
That you but only begged a last farewell,
He fetched an inward groan; and every time
I named you, sighed, as if his heart were breaking,
But, shunned my eyes, and guiltily looked down;
He seemed not now that awful Antony,
Who shook an armed assembly with his nod;
But, making show as he would rub his eyes,
Disguised and blotted out a falling tear.

Cleo.—Did he then weep? And was I worth a tear?
If what thou hast to say be not as pleasing,
Tell me no more, but let me die contented.

Char.—He bid me say,—He knew himself so well,
He could deny you nothing, if he saw you;
And therefore——

Cleo.—Thou wouldst say, he would not see me?

Char.—And therefore begged you not to use a power,
Which he could ill resist; yet he should ever
Respect you, as he ought.

Cleo.—Is that a word
For Antony to use to Cleopatra?
O that faint word, respect! how I disdain it!
Disdain myself, for loving after it!
He should have kept that word for cold Octavia.
Respect is for a wife: Am I that thing,
That dull, insipid lump, without desires,
And without power to give them?

Alex.—You misjudge;
You see through love, and that deludes your sight;

As, what is straight, seems crooked through the water:
But I, who bear my reason undisturbed,
Can see this Antony, this dreaded man,
A fearful slave, who fain would run away,
And shuns his master's eyes: If you pursue him,
My life on't, he still drags a chain along
That needs must clog his flight.

Cleo.—Could I believe thee!—

Alex.—By every circumstance I know he loves.
True, he's hard prest, by interest and by honour;
Yet he but doubts, and parleys, and casts out
Many a long look for succour.

Cleo.—He sends word,
He fears to see my face.

Alex.—And would you more?
He shows his weakness who declines the combat,
And you must urge your fortune. Could he speak
More plainly? To my ears, the message sounds—
Come to my rescue, Cleopatra, come;
Come, free me from Ventidius; from my tyrant:
See me, and give me a pretence to leave him!—
I hear his trumpets. This way he must pass.
Please you, retire a while; I'll work him first,
That he may bend more easy.

Cleo.—You shall rule me;
But all, I fear, in vain. (Exit with Charmion and Iras.

Alex.—I fear so too;
Though I concealed my thoughts, to make her bold;
But 'tis our utmost means, and fate befriend it!
(Withdraws.

Enter Lictor *with Fasces; one bearing the Eagle; then enter* Antony *with* Ventidius, *followed by other* Commanders

Ant.—Octavius is the minion of blind chance,
But hold from virtue nothing.

Vent.—Has he courage?

Ant.—But just enough to season him from coward.
Oh, 'tis the coldest youth upon a charge,
The most deliberate fighter! if he ventures
(As in Illyria once, they say, he did,
To storm a town), 'tis when he cannot choose;
When all the world have fixt their eyes upon him;
And then he lives on that for seven years after;
But, at a close revenge he never fails.

Vent.—I heard you challenged him.

Ant.—I did, Ventidius.
What think'st thou was his answer? 'Twas so tame!—
He said, he had more ways than one to die;
I had not.
Vent.—Poor!
Ant.—He has more ways than one;
But he would choose them all before that one.
Vent.—He first would choose an ague, or a fever.
Ant.—No; it must be an ague, not a fever;
He has not warmth enough to die by that.
Vent.—Or old age and a bed.
Ant.—Ay, there's his choice,
He would live, like a lamp, to the last wink,
And crawl upon the utmost verge of life.
O Hercules! Why should a man like this,
Who dares not trust his fate for one great action,
Be all the care of Heaven? Why should he lord it
O'er fourscore thousand men, of whom each one
Is braver than himself?
Vent.—You conquered for him:
Philippi knows it; there you shared with him
That empire, which your sword made all your own.
Ant.—Fool that I was, upon my eagle's wings
I bore this wren, till I was tired with soaring,
And now he mounts above me.
Good heavens, is this—is this the man who braves me?
Who bids my age make way? Drives me before him,
To the world's ridge, and sweeps me off like rubbish?
Vent.—Sir, we lose time; the troops are mounted all.
Ant.—Then give the word to march:
I long to leave this prison of a town,
To join thy legions; and, in open field,
Once more to show my face. Lead, my deliverer.

Enter ALEXAS

Alex.—Great emperor,
In mighty arms renowned above mankind,
But, in soft pity to the opprest, a god;
This message sends the mournful Cleopatra
To her departing lord.
Vent.—Smooth sycophant!
Alex.—A thousand wishes, and ten thousand prayers,
Millions of blessings wait you to the wars;
Millions of sighs and tears she sends you too,
And would have sent

As many dear embraces to your arms,
As many parting kisses to your lips;
But those, she fears, have wearied you already.

Vent. (aside).—False crocodile!

Alex.—And yet she begs not now, you would not leave her;
That were a wish too mighty for her hopes,
Too presuming
For her low fortune, and your ebbing love;
That were a wish for her more prosperous days,
Her blooming beauty, and your growing kindness.

Ant. (aside.)—Well, I must man it out:—What would the queen?

Alex.—First, to these noble warriors, who attend
Your daring courage in the chase of fame,—
Too daring, and too dangerous for her quiet,—
She humbly recommends all she holds dear,
All her own cares and fears,—the care of you.

Vent.—Yes, witness Actium.

Ant.—Let him speak, Ventidius.

Alex.—You, when his matchless valour bears him forward,
With ardour too heroic, on his foes,
Fall down, as she would do, before his feet;
Lie in his way, and stop the paths of death:
Tell him, this god is not invulnerable;
That absent Cleopatra bleeds in him;
And, that you may remember her petition,
She begs you wear these trifles, as a pawn,
Which, at your wished return, she will redeem
(Gives jewels to the Commanders.
With all the wealth of Egypt:
This to the great Ventidius she presents,
Whom she can never count her enemy,
Because he loves her lord.

Vent.—Tell her, I'll none on't;
I'm not ashamed of honest poverty;
Not all the diamonds of the east can bribe
Ventidius from his faith. I hope to see
These and the rest of all her sparkling store,
Where they shall more deservingly be placed.

Ant.—And who must wear them then?

Vent.—The wronged Octavius.

Ant.—You might have spared that word.

Vent.—And he that bribe.

Ant.—But have I no remembrance?

Alex.—Yes, a dear one;

Your slave the queen——

Ant.—My mistress.

Alex.—Then your mistress;
Your mistress would, she says, have sent her soul,
But that you had long since; she humbly begs
This ruby bracelet, set with bleeding hearts,
The emblems of her own, may bind your arm.
(Presenting a bracelet.

Vent.—Now, my best lord,—in honour's name, I ask you,
For manhood's sake, and for your own dear safety,—
Touch not these poisoned gifts,
Infected by the sender; touch them not;
Myriads of bluest plagues lie underneath them,
And more than aconite has dipt the silk.

Ant.—Nay, now you grow too cynical, Ventidius:
A lady's favours may be worn with honour.
What, to refuse her bracelet! On my soul,
When I lie pensive in my tent alone,
'Twill pass the wakeful hours of winter nights,
To tell these pretty beads upon my arms,
To count for every one a soft embrace,
A melting kiss at such and such a time:
And now and then the fury of her love,
When——And what harm's in this?

Alex.—None, none, my lord,
But what's to her, that now 'tis past for ever.

Ant. (going to tie it).—We soldiers are so awkward—help me tie it.

Alex.—In faith, my lord, we courtiers too are awkward
In these affairs: so are all men indeed:
Even I, who am not one. But shall I speak?

Ant.—Yes, freely.

Alex.—Then, my lord, fair hands alone
Are fit to tie it; she, who sent it can.

Vent.—Hell, death! this eunuch pander ruins you.
You will not see her?
(Alexas whispers an Attendant, who goes out.

Ant.—But to take my leave.

Vent.—Then I have washed an Æthiop. You're undone;
Y' are in the toils; y' are taken; y' are destroyed:
Her eyes do Cæsar's work.

Ant.—You fear too soon.
I'm constant to myself: I know my strength;
And yet she shall not think me barbarous neither,
Born in the depths of Africa: I am a Roman,

Bred in the rules of soft humanity.
A guest, and kindly used, should bid farewell.
Vent.—You do not know
How weak you are to her, how much an infant:
You are not proof against a smile, or glance;
A sigh will quite disarm you.
Ant.—See, she comes!
Now you shall find you error.—Gods, I thank you:
I formed the danger greater than it was,
And now 'tis near, 'tis lessened.
Vent.—Mark the end yet.

Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMION, *and* IRAS

Ant.—Well, madam, we are met.
Cleo.—Is this a meeting?
Then, we must part?
Ant.—We must.
Cleo.—Who says we must?
Ant.—Our own hard fates.
Cleo.—We make those fates ourselves.
Ant.—Yes, we have made them; we have loved each other,
Into our mutual ruin.
Cleo.—The gods have seen my joys with envious eyes;
I have no friends in heaven; and all the world,
As 'twere the business of mankind to part us,
Is armed against my love: even you yourself
Join with the rest; you, you are armed against me.
Ant.—I will be justified in all I do
To late posterity, and therefore hear me.
If I mix a lie
With any truth, reproach me freely with it;
Else, favour me with silence.
Cleo.—You command me,
And I am dumb.
Vent.—I like this well; he shows authority.
Ant.—That I derive my ruin
From you alone——
Cleo.—O heavens! I ruin you!
Ant.—You promised me your silence, and you break it
Ere I have scarce begun.
Cleo.—Well, I obey you.
Ant.—When I beheld you first, it was in Egypt.
Ere Cæsar saw your eyes, you gave me love,
And were too young to know it; that I settled
Your father in his throne, was for your sake;

I left the acknowledgment for time to ripen.
Cæsar stept in, and, with a greedy hand,
Plucked the green fruit, ere the first blush of red,
Yet cleaving to the bough. He was my lord,
And was, beside, too great for me to rival;
But, I deserved you first, though he enjoyed you.
When, after, I beheld you in Cilicia,
An enemy to Rome, I pardoned you.

Cleo.—I cleared myself——

Ant.—Again you break your promise.
I loved you still, and took your weak excuses,
Took you into my bosom, stained by Cæsar,
And not half mine: I went to Egypt with you,
And hid me from the business of the world,
Shut out inquiring nations from my sight,
To give whole years to you.

Vent.—Yes, to your shame be't spoken. (Aside.

Ant.—How I loved.
Witness, ye days and nights, and all ye hours,
That danced away with down upon your feet,
As all your business were to count my passion!
One day passed by, and nothing saw but love;
Another came, and still 'twas only love:
The suns were wearied out with looking on,
And I untired with loving.
I saw you every day, and all the day;
And every day was still but as the first,
So eager was I still to see you more.

Vent.—'Tis all too true.

Ant.—Fulvia, my wife, grew jealous
(As she indeed had reason), raised a war
In Italy, to call me back.

Vent.—But yet
You went not.

Ant.—While within your arms I lay,
The world fell mouldering from my hands each hour,
And left me scarce a grasp—I thank your love for't.

Vent.—Well pushed: that last was home.

Cleo.—Yet may I speak?

Ant.—If I have urged a falsehood, yes; else, not.
Your silence says, I have not. Fulvia died
(Pardon, you gods, with my unkindness died);
To set the world at peace, I took Octavia,
This Cæsar's sister; in her pride of youth,
And flower of beauty, did I wed that lady,

Whom blushing I must praise, because I left her.
You called; my love obeyed the fatal summons:
This raised the Roman arms; the cause was yours.
I would have fought by land, where I was stronger;
You hindered it: yet, when I fought at sea,
Forsook me fighting; and (O stain to honour!
O lasting shame!) I knew not that I fled;
But fled to follow you.

Vent.—What haste she made to hoist her purple sails!
And, to appear magnificent in flight,
Drew half our strength away.

Ant.—All this you caused.
And, would you multiply more ruins on me?
This honest man, my best, my only friend,
Has gathered up the shipwreck of my fortunes;
Twelve legions I have left, my last recruits.
And you have watched the news, and bring your eyes
To seize them too. If you have aught to answer,
Now speak, you have free leave.

Alex (aside.)—She stands confounded:
Despair is in her eyes.

Vent.—Now lay a sigh in the way to stop his passage:
Prepare a tear, and bid it for his legions;
'Tis like they shall be sold.

Cleo.—How shall I plead my cause, when you, my judge,
Already have condemned me? Shall I bring
The love you bore me for my advocate?
That now is turned against me, that destroys me;
For love, once past, is at the best, forgotten;
But oftener sours to hate: 'twill please my lord
To ruin me, and therefore I'll be guilty.
But, could I once have thought it would have pleased you,
That you would pry, with narrow searching eyes,
Into my faults, severe to my destruction,
And watching all advantages with care,
That serve to make me wretched? Speak, my lord,
For I end here. Though I deserved this usage,
Was it like you to give it?

Ant.—Oh, you wrong me,
To think I sought this parting, or desired
To accuse you more than what you will clear myself.
And justify this breach.

Cleo.—Thus low I thank you;
And, since my innocence will not offend,
I shall not blush to own it.

Vent.—After this,
I think she'll blush at nothing.
Cleo.—You seemed grieved
(And therein you are kind), that Cæsar first
Enjoyed my love, though you deserved it better:
I grieve for that, my lord, much more than you;
For, had I first been yours, it would have saved
My second choice; I never had been his,
And ne'er had been but yours. But Cæsar first,
You say, possessed my love. Not so, my lord:
He first possessed my person; you, my love:
Cæsar loved me; but I loved Antony.
If I endured him after, 'twas because
I judged it due to the first name of men;
And, half constrained, I gave, as to a tyrant,
What he would take by force.
Vent.—O Syren! Syren!
Yet grant that all the love she boasts were true,
Has she not ruined you? I still urge that,
The fatal consequence.
Cleo.—The consequence indeed,
For I dare challenge him, my greatest foe,
To say it was designed: 'tis true, I loved you,
And kept you far from an uneasy wife,—
Such Fulvia was.
Yes, but he'll say, you left Octavia for me;—
And, can you blame me to receive that love,
Which quitted such desert, for worthless me?
How often have I wished some other Cæsar,
Great as the first, and as the second young,
Would court my love, to be refused for you!
Vent.—Words, words; but Actium, sir; remember Actium.
Cleo.—Even there, I dare his malice. True, I counselled
To fight at sea; but I betrayed you not.
I fled, but not to the enemy. 'Twas fear;
Would I had been a man, not to have feared!
For none would then have envied me your friendship,
Who envy me your love.
Ant.—We are both unhappy:
If nothing else, yet our ill fortune parts us.
Speak: would you have me perish by my stay?
Cleo.—If, as a friend, you ask my judgment, go;
If, as a lover, stay. If you must perish——
'Tis a hard word—but stay.
Vent.—See now the effects of her so boasted love!

She strives to drag you down to ruin with her;
But, could she 'scape without you, oh, how soon
Would she let go her hold, and haste to shore,
And never look behind!

Cleo.—Then judge my love by this. (Giving Antony a writing.
Could I have borne
A life or death, a happiness or woe,
From yours divided, this had given me means.

Ant.—By Hercules, the writing of Octavius!
I know it well: 'tis that proscribing hand,
Young as it was, that led the way to mine,
And left me but the second place in murder.—
See, see, Ventidius! here he offers Egypt,
And joins all Syria to it, as a present;
So, in requital, she forsake my fortunes,
And joins her arms with his.

Cleo.—And yet you leave me!
You leave me, Antony; and yet I love you,
Indeed I do: I have refused a kingdom;
That is a trifle;
For I could part with life, with anything,
But only you. Oh, let me die but with you?
Is that a hard request?

Ant.—Next living with you,
'Tis all that Heaven can give.

Alex.—He melts; we conquer. (Aside.

Cleo.—No; you shall go: your interest calls you hence;
Yes; your dear interest pulls too strong, for these
Weak arms to hold you here. (Takes his hand.
Go; leave me, soldier
(For you're no more a lover): leave me dying:
Push me, all pale and panting, from your bosom,
And, when your march begins, let one run after,
Breathless almost for joy, and cry—She's dead.
The soldiers shout; you then, perhaps, may sigh,
And muster all your Roman gravity:
Ventidius chides; and straight your brow clears up,
As I had never been.

Ant.—Gods, 'tis too much; too much for man to bear.

Cleo.—What is't for me then,
A weak, forsaken woman, and a lover?—
Here let me breathe my last: envy me not
This minute in your arms: I'll die apace,
As fast as e'er I can, and end your trouble.

Ant.—Die! rather let me perish; loosened nature

Leap from its hinges, sink the props of heaven,
And fall the skies, to crush the nether world!
My eyes, my soul, my all! (Embraces her.
Vent.—And what's this toy,
In balance with your fortune, honour, fame?
Ant.—What is't, Ventidius?—It outweighs them all;
Why, we have more than conquered Cæsar now:
My queen's not only innocent, but loves me.
This, this is she, who drags me down to ruin!
"But, could she 'scape without me, with what haste
Would she let slip her hold, and take to shore,
And never look behind!"
Down on thy knees, blasphemer as thou art,
And ask forgiveness of wronged innocence.
Vent.—I'll rather die, than take it. Will you go?
Ant.—Go! whither? Go from all that's excellent?
Faith, honour, virtue, all good things forbid,
That I should go from her, who sets my love
Above the price of kingdoms! Give, you gods,
Give to your boy, your Cæsar,
This rattle of a globe to play withal,
This gewgaw world, and put him cheaply off:
I'll be not pleased with less than Cleopatra.
Cleo.—She's wholly yours. My heart's so full of joy,
That I shall do some wild extravagance
Of love, in public; and the foolish world,
Which knows not tenderness, will think me mad.
Vent.—O women! women! women! all the gods
Have not such power of doing good to man,
As you of doing harm. (Exit.
Ant.—Our men are armed:—
Unbar the gate that looks to Cæsar's camp:
I would revenge the treachery he meant me;
And long security makes conquest easy.
I'm eager to return before I go;
For, all the pleasures I have known beat thick
On my remembrances.—How I long for night!
That both the sweets of mutual love may try,
And triumph once o're Cæsar ere we die. (Exeunt.

ACT III

SCENE I

At one door enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMION, IRAS, *and* ALEXAS, *a Train of* Egyptians: *at the other* ANTONY *and* Romans. *The en-*

trance on both sides is prepared by music; the trumpets first sounding on ANTONY'S *part: then answered by timbrels, etc., on* CLEOPATRA'S. CHARMION *and* IRAS *hold a laurel wreath betwixt them. A Dance of* Egyptians. *After the ceremony,* CLEOPATRA *crowns* ANTONY

Ant.—I thought how those white arms would fold me in,
And strain me close, and melt me into love;
So pleased with that sweet image, I sprung forwards,
And added all my strength to every blow.
Cleo.—Come to me, come, my soldier, to my arms!
You've been too long away from my embraces;
But, when I have you fast, and all my own.
With broken murmurs, and with amorous sighs,
I'll say, you were unkind, and punish you,
And mark you red with many an eager kiss.
Ant.—My brighter Venus!
Cleo.—O my greater Mars!
Ant.—Thou join'st us well, my love!
Suppose me come from the Phlegræan plains,
Where gasping giants lay, cleft by my sword,
And mountain-tops paired off each other blow,
To bury those I slew. Receive me, goddess!
Let Cæsar spread his subtle nets; like Vulcan,
In thy embraces I would be beheld
By heaven and earth at once;
And make their envy what they meant their sport.
Let those, who took us, blush; I would love on,
With awful state, regardless of their frowns,
As their superior gods.
There's no satiety of love in thee:
Enjoyed, thou still art new; perpetual spring
Is in thy arms; the ripened fruit but falls,
And blossoms rise to fill its empty place;
And I grow rich by giving.

Enter VENTIDIUS, *and stands apart*

Alex.—Oh, now the danger's past, your general comes!
He joins not in your joys, nor minds your triumphs;
But, with contracted brows, looks frowning on,
As envying your success.
Ant.—Now, on my soul, he loves me; truly loves me:
He never flattered me in any vice,
But awes me with his virtue: even this minute,
Me thinks, he has a right of chiding me.
Lead to the temple: I'll avoid his presence;

It checks too strong upon me. (Exeunt the rest.
(As Antony is going, Ventidius pulls him by the robe.
Vent.—Emperor!
Ant.—'Tis the old argument; I pr'ythee, spare me.
(Looking back.
Vent.—But this one hearing, emperor.
Ant.—Let go
My robe; or, by my father Hercules——
Vent.—By Hercules' father, that's yet greater,
I bring you somewhat you would wish to know.
Ant.—Thou see'st we are observed; attend me here,
And I'll return. (Exit.
Vent.—I am waning in his favour, yet I love him;
I love this man, who runs to meet his ruin;
And sure the gods, like me, are fond of him:
His virtues lie so mingled with his crimes,
As would confound their choice to punish one,
And not reward the other.

Enter ANTONY

Ant.—We can conquer,
You see, without your aid.
We have dislodged their troops;
They look on us at distance, and, like curs
'Scaped from the lion's paws, they bay far off.
And lick their wounds, and faintly threaten war.
Five thousand Romans, with their faces upward,
Lie breathless on the plain.
Vent.—'Tis well; and he,
Who lost them, could have spared ten thousand more.
Yet if, by this advantage, you could gain
An easier peace, while Cæsar doubts the chance
Of arms——
Ant.—Oh, think not on't, Ventidius!
The boy pursues my ruin, he'll no peace;
His malice is considerate in advantage.
Oh, he's the coolest murderer! so staunch,
He kills, and keeps his temper.
Vent.—Have you no friend
In all his army, who has power to move him?
Mæcenas, or Agrippa, might do much.
Ant.—They're both too deep in Cæsar's interests.
We'll work it out by dint of sword, or perish.
Vent.—Fain I would find some other.
Ant.—Thank thy love.

Some four or five such victories as this
Will save thy further pains.
Vent.—Expect no more; Cæsar is on his guard:
I know, sir, you have conquered against odds;
But still you draw supplies from one poor town,
And of Egyptians: he has all the world,
And, at his beck, nations come pouring in,
To fill the gaps you make. Pray, think again.
Ant.—Why dost thou drive me from myself, to search
For foreign aids?—to hunt my memory,
And range all o'er a waste and barren place,
To find a friend? The wretched have no friends,
Yet I had one, the bravest youth of Rome,
Whom Cæsar loves beyond the love of women:
He could resolve his mind, as fire does wax,
From that hard rugged image melt him down,
And mould him in what softer form he pleased.
Vent.—Him would I see; that man, of all the world;
Just such a one we want.
Ant.—He loved me too;
I was his soul; he lived not but in me:
We were so closed within each other's breasts,
The rivets were not found, that joined us first.
That does not reach us yet: we were so mixt,
As meeting streams, both to ourselves were lost;
We were one mass; we could not give or take,
But from the same; for he was I, I he.
Vent.—He moves as I would wish him. (Aside.
Ant.—After this,
I need not tell his name;—'twas Dolabella.
Vent.—He's now in Cæsar's camp.
Ant.—No matter where,
Since he's no longer mine. He took unkindly,
That I forbade him Cleopatra's sight,
Because I feared he loved her: he confessed,
He had a warmth, which, for my sake he stifled;
For 'twere impossible that two, so one,
Should not have loved the same. When he departed,
He took no leave; and that confirmed my thoughts.
Vent.—It argues, that he loved you more than her,
Else he had stayed; but he perceived you jealous,
And would not grieve his friend: I know he loves you.
Ant.—I should have seen him, then, ere now.
Vent.—Perhaps
He has thus long been labouring for your peace.

Ant.—Would he were here!
Vent.—Would you believed he loved you?
I read your answer in your eyes, you would.
Not to conceal it longer, he has sent
A messenger from Cæsar's camp, with letters.
Ant.—Let him appear.
Vent.—I'll bring him instantly.
(Exit Ventidius, and re-enters immediately with Dolabella.
Ant.—'Tis he himself! himself, by holy friendship!
(Runs to embrace him.
Art thou returned at last, my better half?
Come, give me all myself!
Let me not live,
If the young bridegroom, longing for his night,
Was ever half so fond.
Dola.—I must be silent, for my soul is busy
About a nobler work: she's new come home,
Like a long-absent man, and wanders o'er
Each room, a stranger to her own, to look
If all be safe.
Ant.—Thou hast what's left of me;
For I am now so sunk from what I was,
Thou find'st me at my lowest water-mark.
The rivers that ran in, and raised my fortunes,
Are all dried up, or take another course:
What I have left is from my native spring;
I've still a heart that swells, in scorn of fate,
And lifts me to my banks.
Dola.—Still you are lord of all the world to me.
Ant.—Why, then I yet am so; for thou art all.
If I had any joy when thou wert absent,
I grudged it to myself; methought I robbed
Thee of thy part. But, O my Dolabella!
Thou hast beheld me other than I am.
Hast thou not seen my morning chambers filled
With sceptred slaves, who waited to salute me?
With eastern monarchs, who forgot the sun,
To worship my uprising?—menial kings
Ran coursing up and down my palace-yard,
Stood silent in my presence, watched my eyes,
And, at my least command, all started out,
Like racers to the goal.
Dola.—Slaves to your fortune.
Ant.—Fortune is Cæsar's now; and what am I?
Vent.—What you have made yourself; I will not flatter.

Ant.—Is this friendly done?
Dola.—Yes; when his end is so. I must join with him;
Indeed I must, and yet you must not chide;
Why am I else your friend?
Ant.—Take heed, young man,
How thou upbraid'st my love: The queen has eyes,
And thou too hast a soul. Canst thou remember,
When, swelled with hatred, thou beheld'st her first,
As accessory to thy brother's death?
Dola.—Spare my remembrance; 'twas a guilty day,
And still the blush hangs here.
Ant.—To clear herself,
For sending him no aid, she came from Egypt,
Her galley down the silver Cydnus rowed,
The tackling silk, the streamers waved with gold;
The gentle winds were lodged in purple sails:
Her nymphs, like Nereids, round her couch were placed;
Where she, another sea-born Venus, lay.
Dola.—No more; I would not hear it.
Ant.—Oh, you must!
She lay, and leant her cheek upon her hand,
And cast a look so languishingly sweet,
As if, secure of all beholders' hearts,
Neglecting, she could take them: boys, like Cupids,
Stood fanning, with their painted wings, the winds,
That played about her face. But if she smiled,
A darting glory seemed to blaze abroad,
That men's desiring eyes were never wearied,
But hung upon the object: To soft flutes
The silver oars kept time; and while they played,
The hearing gave new pleasure to the sight;
And both to thought. 'Twas heaven, or somewhat more:
For she so charmed all hearts, that gazing crowds
Stood panting on the shore, and wanted breath
To give their welcome voice.
Then, Dolabella, where was then thy soul?
Was not thy fury quite disarmed with wonder?
Didst thou not shrink behind me from those eyes
And whisper in my ear—Oh, tell her not
That I accused her with my brother's death?
Dola.—And should my weakness be a plea for yours?
Mine was an age when love might be excused,
When kindly warmth, and when my springing youth
Made it a debt to nature. Yours——
Vent.—Speak boldly.

Yours, he would say, in your declining age,
When no more heat was left but what you forced,
When all the sap was needful for the trunk,
When it went down, then you constrained the course,
And robbed from nature, to supply desire;
In you (I would not use so harsh a word)
'Tis but plain dotage.

Ant.—Ha!

Dola.—'Twas urged too home.—
But yet the loss was private, that I made;
'Twas but myself I lost: I lost no legions;
I had no world to lose, no people's love.

Ant.—This from a friend?

Dola.—Yes, Antony, a true one;
A friend so tender, that each word I speak
Stabs my own heart, before it reach your ear.
Oh, judge me not less kind, because I chide!
To Cæsar I excuse you.

Ant.—O ye gods!
Have I then lived to be excused to Cæsar?

Dola.—As to your equal.

Ant.—Well, he's but my equal:
While I wear this he never shall be more.

Dola.—I bring conditions from him.

Ant.—Are they noble?
Methinks thou shouldst not bring them else; yet he
Is full of deep dissembling; knows no honour
Divided from his interest. Fate mistook him;
For nature meant him for an usurer:
He's fit indeed to buy, not conquer kingdoms.

Vent.—Then, granting this,
What power was theirs, who wrought so hard a temper
To honourable term?

Ant.—It was my Dolabella, or some god.

Dola.—Nor I, nor yet Mæcenas, nor Aprippa:
They were your enemies; and I, a friend,
Too weak alone; yet 'twas a Roman's deed.

Ant.—'Twas like a Roman done: show me that man,
Who has preserved my life, my love, my honour;
Let me but see his face.

Vent.—That task is mine,
And, Heaven, thou know'st how pleasing.
(Exit Ventidius.

Dola.—You'll remember
To whom you stand obliged?

Ant.—When I forget it,
Be thou unkind, and that's my greatest curse.
My queen shall thank him too.
Dola.—I fear she will not.
Ant.—But she shall do it: The queen, my Dolabella!
Hast thou not still some grudgings of thy fever?
Dola.—I would not see her lost.
Ant.—When I forsake her,
Leave me my better stars! for she has truth
Beyond her beauty. Cæsar tempted her,
At no less price than kingdoms, to betray me;
But she resisted all: and yet thou chidest me
For loving her too well. Could I do so?
Dola.—Yes; there's my reason.

Re-enter VENTIDIUS, *with* OCTAVIA, *leading* ANTONY'S *two little Daughters*

Ant.—Where?—Octavia there! (Starting back.
Vent.—What, is she poison to you?—a disease?
Look on her, view her well, and those she brings:
Are all strangers to your eyes? has nature
No secret call, no whisper they are yours?
Dola.—For shame, my lord, if not for love, receive them
With kinder eyes. If you confess a man,
Meet them, embrace them, bid them welcome to you.
Your arms should open, even without your knowledge,
To clasp them in; your feet should turn to wings,
To bear you to them; and your eyes dart out
And aim a kiss, ere you could reach the lips.
Ant.—I stood amazed, to think how they came hither.
Vent.—I sent for them; I brought them in unknown
To Cleopatra's guards.
Dola.—Yet, are you cold?
Octav.—Thus long I have attended for my welcome;
Which, as a stranger, sure I might expect.
Who am I?
Ant.—Cæsar's sister.
Octav.—That's unkind.
Had I been nothing more than Cæsar's sister,
Know, I had still remained in Cæsar's camp:
But your Octavia, your much injured wife,
Though banished from your bed, driven from your house,
In spite of Cæsar's sister, still is yours.
'Tis true, I have a heart disdains your coldness,
And prompts me not to seek what you should offer;

But a wife's virtue still surmounts that pride.
I come to claim you as my own; to show
My duty first; to ask, nay beg, your kindness:
Your hand, my lord; 'tis mine, and I will have it.
(Taking his hand.

Vent.—Do, take it; thou deserv'st it.

Dola.—On my soul,
And so she does: she's neither too submissive,
Nor yet too haughty; but so just a mean
Shows, as it ought, a wife and Roman too.

Ant.—I fear, Octavia, you have begged my life.

Octav.—Begged it, my lord?

Ant.—Yes, begged it, my ambassadress!
Poorly and basely begged it of your brother.

Octav.—Poorly and basely I could never beg:
Nor could my brother grant.

Ant.—Shall I, who, to my kneeling slave, could say,
Rise up, and be a king; shall I fall down
And cry,—Forgive me, Cæsar! Shall I set
A man, my equal, in the place of Jove,
As he could give me being? No; that word,
Forgive, would choke me up,
And die upon my tongue.

Dola.—You shall not need it.

Ant.—I will not need it. Come, you've all betrayed me,—
My friend too!—to receive some vile conditions.
My wife has bought me, with her prayers and tears;
And now I must become her branded slave.
In every peevish mood, she will upbraid
The life she gave: if I but look awry,
She cries—I'll tell my brother.

Oct.—My hard fortune
Subjects me still to your unkind mistakes.
But the conditions I have brought are such,
You need not blush to take: I love your honour,
Because 'tis mine; it never shall be said,
Octavia's husband was her brother's slave.
Sir, you are free; free, even from her you loathe;
For, though my brother bargains for your love,
Makes me the price and cement of your peace,
I have a soul like yours; I cannot take
Your love as alms, nor beg what I deserve.
I'll tell my brother we are reconciled;
He shall draw back his troops, and you shall march
To rule the East: I may be dropt at Athens;

No matter where. I never will complain,
But only keep the barren name of wife,
And rid you of the trouble.
Vent.—Was ever such a strife of sullen honour!
Both scorn to be obliged.
Dola.—Oh, she has touched him in the tenderest part;
See how he reddens with despite and shame,
To be outdone in generosity!
Vent.—See how he winks! how he dries up a tear,
That fain would fall!
Ant.—Octavia, I have heard you, and must praise
The greatness of your soul;
But cannot yield to what you have proposed:
For I can ne'er be conquered but by love;
And you do all for duty. You would free me,
And would be dropt at Athens; was't not so?
Octav.—It was, my lord.
Ant.—Then I must be obliged
To one who loves me not; who, to herself,
May call me thankless and ungrateful man:—
I'll not endure it; no.
Vent.—I am glad it pinches there. (Aside.
Octav.—Would you triumph o'er poor Octavia's virtue?
That pride was all I had to bear me up;
That you might think you owed me for your life,
And owed it to my duty, not my love.
I have been injured, and my haughty soul
Could brook but ill the man who slights my bed.
Ant.—Therefore you love me not.
Octav.—Therefore, my lord,
I should not love you.
Ant.—Therefore you would leave me?
Octav.—And therefore I should leave you—if I could.
Dola.—Her soul's too great, after such injuries,
To say she loves; and yet she lets you see it.
Her modesty and silence plead her cause.
Ant.—O Dolabella, which way shall I turn?
I find a secret yielding in my soul;
But Cleopatra, who would die with me,
Must she be left? Pity pleads for Octavia;
But does it not plead more for Cleopatra?
Vent.—Justice and pity both plead for Octavia;
For Cleopatra, neither.
One would be ruined with you; but she first
Had ruined you: The other, you have ruined,

And yet she would preserve you.
In everything their merits are unequal.
Ant.—O my distracted soul!
Octav.—Sweet Heaven compose it!—
Come, come, my lord, if I can pardon you,
Methinks you should accept it. Look on these;
Are they not yours? or stand they thus neglected,
As they are mine? Go to him, children, go;
Kneel to him, take him by the hand, speak to him;
For you may speak, and he may own you too,
Without a blush; and so he cannot all
His children: go, I say, and pull him to me,
And pull him to yourselves, for that bad woman.
You, Agrippina, hang upon his arms;
And you, Antonia, clasp about his waist:
If he will shake you off, if he will dash you
Against the pavement, you must bear it, children;
For you are mine, and I was born to suffer.
(Here the Children go to him, etc.
Vent.—Was ever sight so moving?—Emperor!
Dola.—Friend!
Octav.—Husband!
Both Child.—Father!
Ant.—I am vanquished: take me,
Octavia; take me, children, share me all.
(Embracing them.
I've been a thriftless debtor to your loves,
And run out much, in riot, from your stock;
But all shall be amended.
Octav.—O blest hour!
Dola.—O happy change!
Vent.—My joy stops at my tongue;
But it has found two channels here for one,
And bubbles out above.
Ant. (to Octav.)—This is thy triumph; lead me where thou wilt;
Even to thy brother's camp.
Octav.—All there are yours.

Enter ALEXAS *hastily*

Alex.—The queen, my mistress, sir, and yours——
Ant.—'Tis past.—
Octavia, you shall stay this night: To-morrow,
Cæsar and we are one.
(Exit leading Octavia; Dolabella and the Children follow.

Vent.—There's news for you; run, my officious enunch,
Be sure to be the first; haste forward:
Haste, my dear eunuch, haste. (Exit.

Alex.—This downright fighting fool, this thick-skulled hero,
This blunt, unthinking instrument of death,
With plain dull virtue has outgone my wit.
Pleasure forsook my earliest infancy;
The luxury of others robbed my cradle,
And ravished thence the promise of a man.
Cast out from nature, disinherited
Of what her meanest children claim by kind,
Yet greatness kept me from contempt: that's gone.
Had Cleopatra followed my advice,
Then he had been betrayed who now forsakes.
She dies for love; but she has known its joys:
Gods, is this just, that I, who know no joys,
Must die, because she loves?

Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMION, IRAS, *and Train*

O madam, I have seen what blasts my eyes!
Octavia's here.

Cleo.—Peace with that raven's note.
I know it too; and now am in
The pangs of death.

Alex.—You are no more a queen;
Egypt is lost.

Cleo.—What tell'st thou me of Egypt?
My life, my soul is lost! Octavia has him!—
O fatal name to Cleopatra's love!
My kisses, my embraces now are hers;
While I——But thou hast seen my rival; speak,
Does she deserve this blessing? Is she fair?
Bright as a goddess? and is all perfection
Confined to her? It is. Poor I was made
Of that coarse matter, which, when she was finished,
The gods threw by for rubbish.

Alex.—She is indeed a very miracle.

Cleo.—Death to my hopes, a miracle!

Alex.—A miracle; (Bowing.
I mean of goodness; for in beauty, madam,
You make all wonders cease.

Cleo.—I was too rash:
Take this in part of recompense. But, oh! (Giving a ring.
I fear thou flatterest me.

Char.—She comes! she's here!

Iras.—Fly, madam, Cæsar's sister!

Cleo.—Were she the sister of the thunderer Jove,
And bore her brother's lightning in her eyes,
Thus would I face my rival.
(Meets Octavia with Ventidius. Octavia bears up to her. Their Trains come up on either side.
Octav.—I need not ask if you are Cleopatra;
Your haughty carriage——
Cleo.—Shows I am a queen:
Nor need I ask you, who you are.
Octav.—A Roman:
A name, that makes and can unmake a queen.
Cleo.—Your lord, the man who serves me, is a Roman.
Octav.—He was a Roman, till he lost that name,
To be a slave in Egypt; but I come
To free him thence.
Cleo.—Peace, peace, my lover's Juno.
When he grew weary of that household clog,
He chose my easier bonds.
Octav.—I wonder not
Your bonds are easy: you have long been practised
In that lascivious art: He's not the first
For whom you spread your snares: Let Cæsar witness.
Cleo.—I loved not Cæsar; 'twas but gratitude
I paid his love: The worst your malice can,
Is but to say the greatest of mankind
Has been my slave. The next, but far above him
In my esteem, is he whom law calls yours.
But whom his love made mine.
Octav.—I would view nearer (Coming up close to her.
That face, which has so long usurped my right,
To find the inevitable charms, that catch
Mankind so sure, that ruined my dear lord.
Cleo.—Oh, you do well to search; for had you known
But half these charms, you had not lost his heart.
Octav.—Far be their knowledge from a Roman lady,
Far from a modest wife! Shame on our sex,
Dost thou not blush to own those black endearments,
That make sin pleasing?
Cleo.—You may blush, who want them.
If bounteous nature, if indulgent Heaven
Have given me charms to please the bravest man,
Should I not thank them? Should I be ashamed,
And not be proud? I am, that he has loved me;
And, when I love not him, Heaven change this face
For one like that.

Octav.—Thou lov'st him not so well.
Cleo.—I love him better, and deserve him more.
Octav.—You do not; cannot: You have been his ruin.
Who made him cheap at Rome, but Cleopatra?
Who made him scorned abroad, but Cleopatra?
At Actium, who betrayed him? Cleopatra.
Who made his children orphans, and poor me
A wretched widow? only Cleopatra.
Cleo.—Yet she, who loves him best, is Cleopatra.
If you have suffered, I have suffered more.
You bear the specious title of a wife,
To gild your cause, and draw the pitying world
To favour it: the world condemns poor me.
For I have lost my honour, lost my fame,
And stained the glory of my royal house,
And all to bear the branded name of mistress.
There wants but life, and that too I would lose
For him I love.
Octav.—Be't so, then: take thy wish. (Exit with her Train.
Cleo.—And 'tis my wish,
Now he is lost for whom alone I lived.
My sight grows dim, and every object dances,
And swims before me, in the maze of death.
My spirits, while they were opposed, kept up;
They could not sink beneath a rival's scorn!
But now she's gone, they faint.
Alex.—Mine have had leisure
To recollect their strength, and furnish counsel,
To ruin her, who else must ruin you.
Cleo.—Vain promiser!
Lead me, my Charmion; nay, your hand too, Iras.
My grief has weight enough to sink you both.
Conduct me to some solitary chamber,
And draw the curtains round;
Then leave me to myself, to take alone
My fill of grief:
There I till death will his unkindness weep;
As harmless infants moan themselves asleep. (Exeunt.

ACT IV

SCENE I

Enter ANTONY *and* DOLABELLA

Dola.—Why would you shift it from yourself on me?
Can you not tell her, you must part?

Ant.—I cannot.
I could pull out an eye, and bid it go,
And t'other should not weep. O Dolabella
How many deaths are there in this word, Depart!
I dare not trust my tongue to tell her so:
One look of hers would thaw me into tears,
And I should melt, till I were lost again.
Dola.—Then let Ventidius;
He's rough by nature.
Ant.—Oh, he'll speak too harshly;
He'll kill her with the news: Thou, only thou.
Dola.—Nature has cast me in so soft a mould,
That but to hear a story, feigned for pleasure,
Of some sad lover's death, moistens my eyes,
And robs me of my manhood. I should speak
So faintly, with such fear to grieve her heart,
She'd not believe it earnest.
Ant.—Therefore,—therefore
Thou only, thou art fit: Think thyself me;
And when thou speak'st (but let it first be long),
Take off the edge from every sharper sound,
And let our parting be as gently made,
As other loves begin: Wilt thou do this?
Dola.—What you have said so sinks into my soul,
That, if I must speak, I shall speak just so.
Ant.—I leave you then to your sad task: Farewell.
I sent her word to meet you.
(Goes to the door, and comes back.
I forgot;
Let her be told, I'll make her peace with mine:
Her crown and dignity shall be preserved,
If I have power with Cæsar.——Oh, be sure
To think on that.
Dola.—Fear not, I will remember.
(Antony goes again to the door, and comes back.
Ant.—And tell her, too, how much I was constrained;
I did not this, but with extremest force:
Desire her not to hate my memory,
For I still cherish hers——insist on that.
Dola.—Trust me, I'll not forget it.
Ant.—Then that's all. (Goes out, and returns again.
Wilt thou forgive my fondness this once more?
Tell her, though we shall never meet again,
If I should hear she took another love,
The news would break my heart.—Now I must go;

For every time I have returned, I feel
My soul more tender; and my next command
Would be, to bid her stay, and ruin both. (Exit.

Dola.—Men are but children of a larger growth;
Our appetites are apt to change as theirs,
And full as craving too, and full as vain;
And yet the soul, shut up in her dark room,
Viewing so clear abroad, at home sees nothing;
But, like a mole in earth, busy and blind,
Works all her folly up, and casts it outward
To the world's open view: Thus I discovered,
And blamed the love of ruined Antony;
Yet wish that I were he, to be so ruined.

Enter VENTIDIUS *above*

Vent.—Alone, and talking to himself? concerned too?
Perhaps my guess is right; he loved her once,
And may pursue it still.

Dola.—O friendship! friendship!
Ill canst thou answer this; and reason, worse:
Unfaithful in the attempt; hopeless to win;
And if I win, undone: mere madness all.
And yet the occasion's fair. What injury
To him, to wear the robe which he throws by!

Vent.—None, none at all. This happens as I wish,
To ruin her yet more with Antony.

Enter CLEOPATRA, *talking with* ALEXAS; CHARMION, IRAS *on the other side*

Dola.—She comes! What charms have sorrow on that face!
Sorrow seems pleased to dwell with so much sweetness;
Yet, now and then, a melancholy smile
Breaks loose, like lightning in a winter's night,
And shows a moment's day.

Vent.—If she should love him too! her eunuch there?
That porc'pisce bodes ill weather. Draw, draw nearer.
Sweet devil, that I may hear.

Alex.—Believe me; try
(Dolabella goes over to Charmion and Iras; seems to talk with them.
To make him jealous; jealousy is like
A polished glass held to the lips when life's in doubt:
If there be breath, 'twill catch the damp, and show it.

Cleo.—I grant you, jealousy's a proof of love,

But 'tis a weak and unavailing medicine;
It puts out the disease, and makes it show,
But has no power to cure.

Alex.—'Tis your last remedy, and strongest too:
And then this Dolabella, who so fit
To practise on? He's handsome, valiant, young,
And looks as he were laid for nature's bait,
To catch weak woman's eyes.
He stands already more than half suspected
Of loving you: the least kind word or glance
You give this youth, will kindle him with love:
Then, like a burning vessel set adrift,
You'll send him down amain before the wind,
To fire the heart of jealous Antony.

Cleo.—Can I do this? Ah, no; my love's so true,
That I can neither hide it where it is,
Nor show it where it is not. Nature meant me
A wife; a silly, a harmless, household dove,
Fond without art, and kind without deceit;
But Fortune, that has made a mistress of me,
Has thrust me out to the wide world, unfurnished
Of falsehood to be happy.

Alex.—Force yourself.
The event will be, your lover will return,
Doubly desirous to possess the good
Which once he feared to lose.

Cleo.—I must attempt it;
But oh, with what regret!
(Exit Alexas. She comes up to Dolabella.

Vent.—So, now the scene draws near; they're in my reach.

Cleo. (to Dol.)—Discoursing with my women! might not I
Share in your entertainment?

Char.—You have been
The subject of it, madam.

Cleo.—How! and how?

Iras.—Such praises of your beauty!

Cleo.—Mere poetry.
Your Roman wits, your Gallus and Tibullus,
Have taught you this from Cytheris and Delia.

Dola.—Those Roman wits have never been in Egypt;
Cytheris and Delia else had been unsung:
I, who have seen——had I been born a poet,
Should choose a nobler name.

Cleo.—You flatter me.
But, 'tis your nation's vice: All of your country

Are flatterers, and all false. Your friend's like you.
I'm sure, he sent you not to speak these words.
Dola.—No, madam; yet he sent me——
Cleo.—Well, he sent you——
Dola.—Of a less pleasing errand.
Cleo.—How less pleasing?
Less to yourself, or me?
Dola.—Madam, to both;
For you must mourn, and I must grieve to cause it.
Cleo.—You, Charmion, and your fellow, stand at distance.—
Hold up, my spirits. (Aside)—Well, now your mournful matter!
For I'm prepared, perhaps can guess it too.
Dola.—I wish you would; for 'tis a thankless office,
To tell ill news: And I, of all your sex,
Most fear displeasing you.
Cleo.—Of all your sex,
I soonest could forgive you, if you should.
Vent.—Most delicate advances! Women! women!
Dear, damned, inconstant sex!
Cleo.—In the first place,
I am to be forsaken; is't not so?
Dola.—I wish I could not answer to that question.
Cleo.—Then pass it o'er because it troubles you:
I should have been more grieved another time.
Next, I'm to lose my kingdom——Farewell, Egypt!
Yet, is there any more?
Dola.—Madam, I fear
Your too deep sense of grief has turned your reason.
Cleo.—No, no, I'm not run mad; I can bear fortune:
And love may be expelled by other love,
As poisons are by poisons.
Dola.—You o'erjoy me, madam.
To find your griefs so moderately borne.
You've heard the worst; all are not false like him.
Cleo.—No; Heaven forbid they should.
Dola.—Some men are constant.
Cleo.—And constancy deserves reward, that's certain.
Dola.—Deserve it not; but give it leave to hope.
Vent.—I'll swear, thou hast my leave. I have enough:
But how to manage this! Well, I'll consider. (Exit.
Dola.—I came prepared
To tell you heavy news; news, which I thought
Would fright the blood from your pale cheeks to hear:
But you have met it with a cheerfulnes,

That makes my task more easy; and my tongue,
Which on another's message was employed,
Would gladly speak its own.

Cleo.—Hold, Dolabella.
First tell me, were you chosen by my lord?
Or sought you this employment?

Dola.—He picked me out; and, as his bosom friend,
He charged me with his words.

Cleo.—The message then
I know was tender, and each accent smooth,
To mollify that rugged word, Depart.

Dola.—Oh, you mistake: He chose the harshest words;
With fiery eyes, and with contracted brows,
He coined his face in the severest stamp;
And fury shook his fabric, like an earthquake;
He heaved for vent, and burst like bellowing Ætna,
In sounds scarce human—"Hence away for ever,
Let her begone, the blot of my renown,
And bane of all my hopes!"
(All the time of this speech, Cleopatra seems more and more concerned, till she sinks quite down.
"Let her be driven, as far as men can think,
From man's commerce! she'll poison to the centre."

Cleo.—Oh, I can bear no more!

Dola.—Help, help!—O wretch! O cursed, cursed wretch!
What have I done!

Char.—Help, chafe her temples, Iras.

Iras.—Bend, bend her forward quickly.

Char.—Heaven be praised,
She comes again.

Cleo.—Oh, let him not approach me.
Why have you brought me back to this loathed being,
The abode of falsehood, violated vows,
And injured love? For pity, let me go;
For, if there be a place of long repose,
I'm sure I want it. My disdainful lord
Can never break that quiet; nor awake
The sleeping soul, with hollowing in my tomb
Such words as fright her hence.—Unkind, unkind!

Dola.—Believe me, 'tis against myself I speak; (Kneeling.
That sure desires belief; I injured him:
My friend ne'er spoke those words. Oh, had you seen
How often he came back, and every time
With something more obliging and more kind,
To add to what he said; what dear farewells;

How almost vanquished by his love he parted,
And leaned to what unwillingly he left!
I, traitor as I was, for love of you
(But what can you not do, who made me false?)
I forged that lie; for whose forgiveness kneels
This self-accused, self-punished criminal.

Cleo.—With how much ease believe we what we wish!
Rise, Dolabella; if you have been guilty,
I have contributed, and too much love
Has made me guilty too.
The advance of kindness, which I made, was feigned,
To call back fleeting love by jealousy;
But 'twould not last. Oh, rather let me lose
Than so ignobly trifle with his heart.

Dola.—I find your breast fenced round from human reach,
Transparent as a rock of solid crystal;
Seen through, but never pierced. My friend, my friend,
What endless treasure hast thou thrown away;
And scattered, like an infant, in the ocean,
Vain sums of wealth, which none can gather thence!

Cleo.—Could you not beg
And hour's admittance to his private ear?
Like one, who wanders through long barren wilds
And yet foreknows no hospitable inn
Is near to succour hunger, eats his fill,
Before his painful march;
So would I feed a while my famished eyes
Before we part; for I have far to go,
If death be far, and never must return.

VENTIDIUS *with* OCTAVIA, *behind.*

Vent.—From hence you may discover—oh, sweet, sweet!
Would you indeed? The pretty hand in earnest?

Dola.—I will, for this reward. (Takes her hand.
Draw it not back.
'Tis all I e'er will beg.

Vent.—They turn upon us.

Octav.—What quick eyes has guilt!

Vent.—Seem not to have observed them, and go on.

They enter.

Dola.—Saw you the emperor, Ventidius?

Vent.—No.
I sought him; but I heard that he was private,
None with him but Hipparchus, his freedman.

Dola.—Know you his business?
Vent.—Giving him instructions,
And letters to his brother Cæsar.
Dola.—Well,
He must be found. *(Exeunt* DOLABELLA *and* CLEOPATRA.
Octav.—Most glorious impudence!
Vent.—She looked, methought,
As she would say—Take your old man, Octavia;
Thank you, I'm better here.—
Well, but what use
Make we of this discovery?
Octav.—Let it die.
Vent.—I pity Dolabella; but she's dangerous;
Her eyes have power beyond Thessalian charms,
To draw the moon from heaven; for eloquence,
The sea-green Syrens taught her voice their flattery;
And, while she speaks, night steals upon the day,
Unmarked of those that hear: Then she's so charming,
Age buds at sight of her, and swells to youth:
The holy priests gaze on her when she smiles;
And with heaved hands, forgetting gravity,
They bless her wanton eyes: Even I, who hate her,
With a malignant joy behold such beauty;
And, while I curse, desire it. Antony
Must needs have some remains of passion still,
Which may ferment into a worse relapse,
If now not fully cured. I know, this minute,
With Cæsar he's endeavouring her peace.
Octav.—You have prevailed:——But for a further purpose
(Walks off.
I'll prove how he will relish this discovery.
What, makes a strumpet's peace! it swells my heart:
It must not, shall not be.
Vent.—His guards appear.
Let me begin, and you shall second me.

Enter ANTONY

Ant.—Octavia, I was looking you, my love:
What, are your letters ready? I have given
My last instructions.
Octav.—Mine, my lord, are written.
Ant.—Ventidius (Drawing him aside.
Vent.—My lord?
Ant.—A word in private.—
When saw you Dolabella?

Vent.—Now, my lord,
He parted hence; and Cleopatra with him.
Ant.—Speak softly.—'Twas by my command he went,
To bear my last farewell.
Vent.—It looked indeed (Aloud.
Like your farewell.
Ant.—More softly.—My farewell?
What secret meaning have you in those words
Of—My farewell? He did it by my order.
Vent.—Then he obeyed your order. I suppose. (Aloud
You bid him do it with all gentleness,
All kindness, and all——love.
Ant.—How she mourned,
The poor forsaken creature!
Vent.—She took it as she ought; she bore your parting
As she did Cæsar's, as she would another's,
Were a new love to come.
Ant.—Thou dost belie her; (Aloud.
Most basely, and maliciously belie her.
Vent.—I thought not to displease you; I have done.
Octav.—You seemed disturbed, my lord. (Coming up.
Ant.—A very trifle.
Retire, my love.
Vent.—It was indeed a trifle.
He sent——
Ant.—No more. Look how thou disobey'st me; (Angrily.
Thy life shall answer it.
Octav.—Then 'tis no trifle.
Vent.—(to Octav.) 'Tis less; a very nothing: You too saw it
As well as I, and therefore 'tis no secret.
Ant.—She saw it!
Vent.—Yes: She saw young Dolabella——
Ant.—Young Dolabella!
Vent.—Young, I think him young,
And handsome too; and so do others think him.
But what of that? He went by your command,
Indeed 'tis probable, with some kind message;
For she received it graciously; she smiled;
And then he grew familiar with her hand,
Squeezed it, and worried it with ravenous kisses;
She blushed, and sighed, and smiled, and blushed again;
At last she took occasion to talk softly,
And brought her cheek up close, and leaned on his;
At which, he whispered kisses back on hers;
And then she cried aloud—That constancy

Should be rewarded.
Octav.—This I saw and heard.
Ant.—What woman was it, whom you heard and saw
So playful with my friend?
Not Cleopatra?
Vent.—Even she, my lord.
Ant.—My Cleopatra?
Vent.—Your Cleopatra;
Dolabella's Cleopatra; every man's Cleopatra.
Ant.—Thou liest.
Vent.—I do not lie, my lord.
Is this so strange? Should mistresses be left,
And not provide against a time of change?
You know she's not much used to lonely nights.
Ant.—I'll think no more on't.
I know 'tis false, and see the plot betwixt you.—
You needed not have gone this way, Octavia.
What harms it you that Cleopatra's just?
She's mine no more. I see, and I forgive:
Urge it no further, love.
Octav.—Are you concerned,
That she's found false?
Ant.—I should be, were it so;
For, though 'tis past, I would not that the world
Should tax my former choice, that I loved one
Of so light note; but I forgive you both.
Vent.—What has my age deserved, that you should think
I would abuse your ears with perjury?
If Heaven be true, she's false.
Ant.—Though heaven and earth
Should witness it, I'll not believe her tainted.
Vent.—I'll bring you, then, a witness
From hell, to prove her so.—Nay, go not back;
(Seeing ALEXAS *just entering, and starting back.*
For stay you must and shall.
Alex.—What means my lord?
Vent.—To make you do what most you hate,—speak truth.
You are of Cleopatra's private counsel,
Of her bed-counsel, her lascivious hours;
Are conscious of each nightly change she makes,
And watch her, as Chaldeans do the moon,
Can tell what signs she passes through, what day.
Alex.—My noble lord!
Vent.—My most illustrious pander,
No fine set speech, no cadence, no turned periods,

But a plain homespun truth, is what I ask:
I did, myself, o'erhear your queen make love
To Dolabella. Speak; for I will know,
By your confession, what more passed betwixt them;
How near the business draws to your employment;
And when the happy hour.

Ant.—Speak truth, Alexas; whether it offend
Or please Ventidius, care not: Justify
Thy injured queen from malice: Dare his worst.

Octav.—(aside). See how he gives him courage! how he fears
To find her false! and shuts his eyes to truth,
Willing to be misled!

Alex.—As far as love may plead for woman's frailty,
Urged by desert and greatness of the lover,
So far, divine Octavia, may my queen
Stand even excused to you for loving him
Who is your lord: so far, from brave Ventidius,
May her past actions hope a fair report.

Ant.—'Tis well, and truly spoken: mark, Ventidius.

Alex.—To you, most noble emperor, her strong passion
Stands not excused, but wholly justified.
Her beauty's charms alone, without her crown,
From Ind and Meroe drew the distant vows
Of sighing kings; and at her feet were laid
The sceptres of the earth, exposed on heaps,
To choose where she would reign:
She thought a Roman only could deserve her,
And, of all Romans, only Antony;
And, to be less than wife to you, disdained
Their lawful passion.

Ant.—'Tis but truth.

Alex.—And yet, though love, and your unmatched desert,
Have drawn her from the due regard of honour,
At last Heaven opened her unwilling eyes
To see the wrongs she offered fair Octavia,
Whose holy bed she lawlessly usurped.
The sad effects of this improsperous war
Confirmed those pious thoughts.

Vent.—(aside). Oh, wheel you there?
Observe him now; the man begins to mend,
And talk substantial reason.—Fear not, eunuch;
The emperor has given thee leave to speak.

Alex.—Else had I never dared to offend his ears
With what the last necessity has urged
On my forsaken mistress; yet I must not

Presume to say, her heart is wholly altered.
Ant.—No, dare not for thy life, I charge thee dare not
Pronounce that fatal word!
Octav.—Must I bear this? Good Heaven, afford me patience.
(Aside.
Vent.—On, sweet eunuch; my dear half-man, proceed.
Alex.—Yet Dolabella
Has loved her long; he, next my god-like lord,
Deserves her best; and should she meet his passion,
Rejected, as she is, by him she loved——
Ant.—Hence from my sight! for I can bear no more:
Let the furies drag thee quick to hell; let all
The longer damned have rest; each torturing hand
Do thou employ, till Cleopatra comes;
Then join thou too, and help to torture her!
(Exit ALEXAS, thrust out by ANTONY.
Octav.—'Tis not well,
Indeed, my lord, 'tis much unkind to me,
To show this passion, this extreme concernment,
For an abandoned, faithless prostitute.
Ant.—Octavia, leave me; I am much disordered:
Leave me, I say.
Octav.—My lord!
Ant.—I bid you leave me.
Vent.—Obey him, madam: best withdraw a while,
And see how this will work.
Octav.—Wherein have I offended you, my lord,
That I am bid to leave you? Am I false,
Or infamous? Am I a Cleopatra?
Were I she,
Base as she is, you would not bid me leave you;
But hang upon my neck, take slight excuses,
And fawn upon my falsehood.
Ant.—'Tis too much.
Too much, Octavia; I am pressed with sorrows
Too heavy to be borne; and you add more:
I would retire, and recollect what's left
Of man within, to aid me.
Octav.—You would mourn,
In private, for your love, who has betrayed you.
You did but half return to me: your kindness
Lingered behind with her. I hear, my lord,
You make conditions for her,
And would include her treaty. Wondrous proofs
Of love to me!

Ant.—Are you my friend, Ventidius?
Or are you turned a Dolabella too,
And let this fury loose?
Vent.—Oh, be advised,
Sweet madam, and retire.
Octav.—Yes, I will go; but never to return.
You shall no more be haunted with this Fury.
My lord, my lord, love will not always last,
When urged with long unkindness and disdain:
Take her again, whom you prefer to me;
She stays but to be called. Poor cozened man!
Let a feigned parting give her back your heart,
Which a feigned love first got; for injured me,
Though my just sense of wrongs forbid my stay,
My duty shall be yours.
To the dear pledges of our former love
My tenderness and care shall be transferred,
And they shall cheer, by turns, my widowed nights:
So, take my last farewell; for I despair
To have you whole, and scorn to take you half. (Exit
Vent.—I combat Heaven, which blasts my best designs:
My last attempt must be to win her back;
But oh! I fear in vain. (Exit.
Ant.—Why was I framed with this plain, honest heart,
Which knows not to disguise its griefs and weakness,
But bears its workings outward to the world?
I should have kept the mighty anguish in,
And forced a smile at Cleopatra's falsehood:
Octavia had believed it, and had stayed.
But I am made a shallow-forded stream,
Seen to the bottom: all my clearness scorned,
And all my faults exposed.—See where he comes,

Enter Dolabella

Who has profaned the sacred name of friend,
And worn it into vileness!
With how secure a brow, and specious form
He gilds the secret villain! Sure that face
Was meant for honesty; but Heaven mismatched it,
And furnished treason out with nature's pomp,
To make its work more easy.
Dola.—O my friend!
Ant.—Well, Dolabella, you performed my message?
Dola.—I did unwillingly.
Ant.—Unwillingly?

Was it so hard for you to bear our parting?
You should have wished it.

Dola.—Why?

Ant.—Because you love me.
And she received my message with as true,
With as unfeigned a sorrow as you brought it?

Dola.—She loves you, even to madness.

Ant.—Oh, I know it.
You, Dolabella, do not better know
How much she loves me. And should I
Forsake this beauty? This all-perfect creature?

Dola.—I could not, were she mine.

Ant.—And yet you first
Persuaded me: How come you altered since?

Dola.—I said at first I was not fit to go:
I could not hear her sighs, and see her tears,
But pity must prevail: And so, perhaps,
It may again with you; for I have promised,
That she should take her last farewell: And, see,
She comes to claim my word.

Enter CLEOPATRA

Ant.—False Dolabella!

Dola.—What's false, my lord?

Ant.—Why, Dolabella's false,
And Cleopatra's false; both false and faithless.
Draw near, you well-joined wickedness, you serpents,
Whom I have in my kindly bosom warmed,
Till I am stung to death.

Dola.—My lord, have I
Deserved to be thus used?

Cleo.—Can Heaven prepare
A newer torment? Can't it find a curse
Beyond our separation?

Ant.—Yes, if fate
Be just, much greater: Heaven should be ingenious
In punishing such crimes. The rolling stone,
And gnawing vulture, were slight pains, invented
When Jove was young, and no examples known
Of mighty ills; but you have ripened sin,
To such a monstrous growth, 'twill pose the gods
To find an equal torture. Two, two such!—
Oh, there's no further name,—two such! to me,
To me, who locked my soul within your breasts,
Had no desires, no joys, no life, but you;

When half the globe was mine, I gave it you
In dowry with my heart; I had no use,
No fruit of all, but you: A friend and mistress
Was what the world could give. O Cleopatra!
O Dolabella! how could you betray
This tender heart, which with an infant fondness
Lay lulled betwixt your bosoms, and there slept,
Secure of injured faith?

Dola.—If she has wronged you,
Heaven, hell and you revenge it.

Ant.—If she has wronged me!
Thou wouldst evade thy part of guilt; but swear
Thou lov'st not her.

Dola.—Not so as I love you.

Ant.—Not so? Swear, swear, I say, thou dost not love her.

Dola.—No more than friendship will allow.

Ant.—No more?
Friendship allows thee nothing: Thou are perjured—
And yet thou didst not swear thou lov'st her not;
But not so much, no more. A trifling hypocrite,
Who dar'st not own to her, thou dost not love,
Nor own to me, thou dost! Ventidius heard it;
Octavia saw it.

Cleo.—They are enemies.

Ant.—Alexas is not so: He, he confessed it;
He, who, next hell, best knew it, he avowed it.
Why do I seek a proof beyond yourself? (To DOLABELLA
You, whom I sent to hear my last farewell,
Returned, to plead her stay.

Dola.—What shall I answer?
If to have loved be guilt, then I have sinned;
But if to have repented of that love
Can wash away my crime, I have repented.
Yet, if I have offended past forgiveness,
Let not her suffer: She is innocent.

Cleo.—Ah, what will not a woman do, who loves?
What means will she refuse, to keep that heart,
Where all her joys are placed? 'Twas I encouraged,
'Twas I blew up the fire that scorched his soul,
To make you jealous, and by that regain you.
But all in vain; I could not counterfeit:
In spite of all the dams my love broke o'er,
And drowned my heart again: fate took the occasion;
And thus one minute's feigning has destroyed
My whole life's truth.

Ant.—Thin cobweb arts of falsehood;
Seen, and broke through at first.
Dola.—Forgive your mistress.
Cleo.—Forgive your friend.
Ant.—You have convinced yourselves.
You plead each other's cause: What witness have you,
That you but meant to raise my jealousy?
Cleo.—Ourselves, and Heaven.
Ant.—Guilt witnesses for guilt. Hence, love and friendship!
You have no longer place in human breasts,
These two have driven you out: Avoid my sight!
I would not kill the man whom I have loved,
And cannot hurt the woman; but avoid me:
I do not know how long I can be tame;
For, if I stay one minute more, to think
How I am wronged, my justice and revenge
Will cry so loud within me, that my pity
Will not be heard for either.
Dola.—Heaven has but
Our sorrow for our sins; and then delights
To pardon erring man: Sweet mercy seems
Its darling attribute, which limits justice;
As if there were degrees in infinite,
And infinite would rather want perfection
Than punish to extent.
Ant.—I can forgive
A foe; but not a mistress and a friend.
Treason is there in its most horrid shape,
Where trust is greatest; and the soul resigned,
Is stabbed by its own guards: I'll hear no more;
Hence from my sight for ever!
Cleo.—How? for ever!
I cannot go one moment from your sight,
And must I go for ever?
My joys, my only joys, are centred here:
What place have I to go to? My own kingdom?
That I have lost for you: Or to the Romans?
They hate me for your sake: Or must I wander
The wide world o'er, a helpless, banished woman,
Banished for love of you; banished from you?
Ay, there's the banishment! Oh, hear me; hear me,
With strictest justice: For I beg no favour;
And if I have offended you, then kill me,
But do not banish me.
Ant.—I must not hear you.

I have a fool within me takes your part;
But honour stops my ears.

Cleo.—For pity hear me!
Would you cast off a slave who followed you?
Who crouched beneath your spurn?—He has no pity!
See, if he gives one tear to my departure;
One look, one kind farewell: O iron heart!
Let all the gods look down, and judge betwixt us,
If he did ever love!

Ant.—No more: Alexas!

Dola.—A perjured villain!

Ant.—(to Cleo.). Your Alexas; yours.

Cleo.—Oh, 'twas his plot; his ruinous design,
To engage you in my love by jealousy.
Hear him; confront him with me; let him speak,

Ant.—I have; I have.

Cleo.—And if he clear me not——

Ant.—Your creature! one, who hangs upon your smiles!
Watches your eye, to say or to unsay,
Whate'er you please! I am not to be moved.

Cleo.—Then must we part? Farewell, my cruel lord!
The appearance is against me; and I go,
Unjustified, for ever from your sight.
How I have loved, you know; how yet I love,
My only comfort is, I know myself:
I love you more, even now you are unkind,
Than when you loved me most; so well, so truly
I'll never strive against it; but die pleased,
To think you once were mine.

Ant.—Good heaven, they weep at parting!
Must I weep too? that calls them innocent.
I must not weep; and yet I must, to think
That I must not forgive.——
Live, but live wretched; 'tis just you should,
Who made me so: Live from each other's sight:
Let me not hear you meet. Set all the earth,
And all the seas, betwixt your sundered loves:
View nothing common but the sun and skies.
Now, all take several ways;
And each your own sad fate, with mine, deplore;
That you were false, and I could trust no more.

(Exeunt severally.

ACT V

SCENE I

Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMION, *and* IRAS.

Char.—Be juster, Heaven; such virtue punished thus,
Will make us think that chance rules all above,
And shuffles, with random hand, the lots,
Which man is forced to draw.
Cleo.—I could tear out these eyes, that gained his heart,
And had not power to keep it. O the curse
Of doting on, even when I find it dotage!
Bear witness, gods, you heard him bid me go;
You, whom he mocked with imprecating vows
Of promised faith!——I'll die; I will not bear it.
You may hold me——
(She pulls out her dagger, and they hold her
But I can keep my breath; I can die inward,
And choke this love.

Enter ALEXAS

Iras.—Help, O Alexas, help!
The queen grows desperate; her soul struggles in her
With all the agonies of love and rage,
And strives to force its passage.
Cleo.—Let me go.
Art thou there, traitor!—O,
O for a little breath, to vent my rage,
Give, give me way, and let me loose upon him.
Alex.—Yes, I deserve it, my ill-timed truth.
Was it for me to prop
The ruins of a falling majesty?
To place myself beneath the mighty flaw,
Thus to be crushed, and pounded into atoms,
By its o'erwhelming weight? 'Tis too presuming
For subjects to preserve that wilful power,
Which courts its own destruction.
Cleo.—I would reason
More calmly with you. Did not you o'errule,
And force my plain, direct, and open love,
Into these crooked paths of jealousy?
Now, what's the event? Octavia is removed;
But Cleopatra's banished. Thou, thou villain,
Hast pushed my boat to open sea; to prove,

At my sad cost, if thou canst steer it back.
It cannot be; I'm lost too far; I'm ruined:
Hence, thou impostor, traitor, monster, devil!—
I can no more: Thou, and my griefs, have sunk
Me down so low, that I want voice to curse thee.

Alex.—Suppose some shipwrecked seaman near the shore,
Dropping and faint, with climbing up the cliff,
If, from above, some charitable hand
Pull him to safety, hazarding himself,
To draw the other's weight; would he look back,
And curse him for his pains? The case is yours;
But one step more, and you have gained the height.

Cleo.—Sunk, never more to rise.

Alex.—Octavia's gone, and Dolabella banished.
Believe me, madam, Antony is yours.
His heart was never lost, but started off
To jealousy, love's last retreat and covert;
Where it lies hid in shades, watchful in silence,
And listening for the sound that calls it back.
Some other, any man ('Tis so advanced),
May perfect this unfinished work, which I
(Unhappy only to myself) have left
So easy to his hand.

Cleo.—Look well thou do't; else——

Alex.—Else, what your silence threatens.—Antony
Is mounted up the Pharos; from whose turret,
He stands surveying our Egyptian galleys,
Engaged with Cæsar's fleet. Now death or conquest!
If the first happen, fate acquits my promise;
If we o'ercome the conqueror is yours. (A distant shout within.

Char.—Have comfort, madam: Did you mark that shout?
(Second shout nearer.

Iras.—Hark! they redouble it.

Alex.—'Tis from the port.
The loudness shows it near: Good news, kind heavens!

Cleo.—Osiris make it so!

Enter Serapion

Serap.—Where, where's the queen?

Alex.—How frightfully the holy coward stares
As if not yet recovered of the assault,
When all his gods, and, what's more dear to him,
His offerings, were at stake.

Serap.—O horror, horror!

Egypt has been; our latest hour has come:
The queen of nations, from her ancient seat,
Is sunk for ever in the dark abyss:
Time has unrolled her glories to the last,
And now closed up the volume.

Cleo.—Be more plain:
Say, whence thou comest; though fate is in thy face,
Which from thy haggard eyes looks wildly out,
And threatens ere thou speakest.

Serap.—I came from Pharos;
From viewing (spare me, and imagine it)
Our land's last hope, your navy——

Cleo.—Vanquished?

Serap.—No:
They fought not.

Cleo.—Then they fled.

Serap.—Nor that. I saw,
With Antony, your well-appointed fleet
Row out; and thrice he waved his hand on high,
And thrice with cheerful cries they shouted back:
'Twas then false Fortune, like a fawning strumpet,
About to leave the bankrupt prodigal,
With a dissembled smile would kiss at parting,
And flatter to the last; the well-timed oars,
Now dipt from every bank, now smoothly run
To meet the foe; and soon indeed they met,
But not as foes. In few, we saw their caps
On either side thrown up; the Egyptian galleys,
Received like friends, passed through, and fell behind
The Roman rear: And now, they all come forward,
And ride within the port.

Cleo.—Enough, Serapion:
I've heard my doom.—This needed not, you gods:
When I lost Antony, your work was done;
'Tis but superfluous malice.—Where's my lord?
How bears he this last blow?

Serap.—His fury cannot be expressed by words:
Thrice he attempted headlong to have fallen
Full on his foes, and aimed at Cæsar's galley:
Withheld, he raves on you; cries,—He's betrayed.
Should he now find you——

Alex.—Shun him; seek your safety,
Till you can clear your innocence.

Cleo.—I'll stay.

Alex.—You must not; haste you to your monument,

While I make speed to Cæsar.

Cleo.—Cæsar! No,
I have no business with him.

Alex.—I can work him
To spare your life, and let this madman perish.

Cleo.—Base fawning wretch! wouldst thou betray him too?
Hence from my sight! I will not hear a traitor;
'Twas thy design brought all this ruin on us.—
Serapion, thou art honest; counsel me:
But haste, each moment's precious.

Serap.—Retire; you must not yet see Antony.
He who began this mischief,
'Tis just he tempt the danger; let him clear you:
And, since he offered you his servile tongue,
To gain a poor precarious life from Cæsar,
Let him expose that fawning eloquence,
And speak to Antony.

Alex.—O heavens! I dare not;
I meet my certain death.

Cleo.—Slave, thou deservest it.—
Not that I fear my lord, will I avoid him;
I know him noble: when he banished me,
And thought me false, he scorned to take my life;
But I'll be justified, and then die with him.

Alex.—O pity me, and let me follow you.

Cleo.—To death, if thou stir hence. Speak, if thou canst,
Now for thy life, which basely thou wouldst save;
While mine I prize at—this! Come, good Serapion.

(Exeunt Cleopatra, Serapion, Charmion, and Iras.

Alex.—O that I less could fear to lose this being,
Which, like a snowball in my coward hand,
The more 'tis grasped, the faster melts away.
Poor reason! what a wretched aid art thou!
For still, in spite of thee,
These two long lovers, soul and body, dread
Their final separation. Let me think:
What can I say to save myself from death?
No matter what becomes of Cleopatra.

Ant.—Which way? where? (Within.

Vent.—This leads to the monument. (Within.

Alex.—Ah me! I hear him; yet I'm unprepared:
My gift of lying's gone;
And this court-devil, which I so oft have raised,
Forsakes me at my need. I dare not stay;
Yet cannot far go hence. (Exit.

Enter ANTONY and VENTIDIUS

Ant.—O happy Cæsar! thou hast men to lead:
Think not 'tis thou hast conquered Antony;
But Rome has conquered Egypt. I'm betrayed.
Vent.—Curse on this treacherous train!
Their soil and heaven infect them all with baseness:
And their young souls come tainted to the world
With the first breath they draw.
Ant.—The original villain sure no god created;
He was a bastard of the sun, by Nile,
Aped into man; with all his mother's mud
Crusted about his soul.
Vent.—The nation is
One universal traitor; and their queen
The very spirit and extract of them all.
Ant.—Is there yet left
A possibility of aid from valour?
Is there one god unsworn to my destruction?
The least unmortgaged hope? for, if there be,
Methinks I cannot fall beneath the fate
Of such a boy as Cæsar.
The world's one half is yet in Antony;
And from each limb of it, that's hewed away
The soul comes back to me.
Vent.—There yet remain
Three legions in the town. The last assault
Lopt off the rest; if death be your design,—
As I must wish it now,—these are sufficient
To make a heap about us of dead foes,
An honest pile for burial.
Ant.—They are enough.
We'll not divide our stars; but, side by side,
Fight emulous, and with malicious eyes
Survey each other's acts: So every death
Thou giv'st, I'll take on me, as a just debt,
And pay thee back a soul.
Vent.—Now you shall see I love you. Not a word
Of chiding more. By my few hours of life,
I am so pleased with this brave Roman fate,
That I would not be Cæsar, to outlive you.
When we put off this flesh, and mount together,
I shall be shown to all the ethereal crowd,—
Lo, this is he who died with Antony!
Ant.—Who knows, but we may pierce through all their troops,

And reach my veterans yet? 'tis worth the 'tempting,
To o'erleap this gulf of fate,
And leave our wandering destinies behind.

Enter ALEXAS, trembling

Vent.—See, see, that villain!
See Cleopatra stamped upon that face,
With all her cunning, all her arts of falsehood!
How she looks out through those dissembling eyes!
How he sets his countenance for deceit,
And promises a lie, before he speaks!
Let me despatch his first. (Drawing.
Alex.—O spare me, spare me!
Ant.—Hold; he's not worth your killing.—On thy life,
Which thou may'st keep, because I scorn to take it,
No syllable to justify thy queen;
Save thy base tongue its office.
Alex.—Sir, she is gone,
Where she shall never be molested more
By love, or you.
Ant.—Fled to her Dolabella!
Die, traitor! I revoke my promise! die! (Going to kill him.
Alex.—O hold! she is not fled.
Ant.—She is: my eyes
Are open to her falsehood; my whole life
Has been a golden dream of love and friendship;
But, now I wake, I'm like a merchant, roused
From soft repose, to see his vessel sinking,
And all his wealth cast over. Ungrateful woman!
Who followed me, but as the swallow summer,
Hatching her young ones in my kindly beams,
Singing her flatteries to my morning wake:
But, now my winter comes, she spreads her wings,
And seeks the spring of Cæsar.
Alex.—Think not so:
Her fortunes have, in all things, mixed with yours.
Had she betrayed her naval force to Rome,
How easily might she have gone to Cæsar,
Secure by such a bribe!
Vent.—She sent it first,
To be more welcome after.
Ant.—'Tis too plain;
Else would she have appeared, to clear herself.
Alex.—Too fatally she has: she could not bear

To be accused by you; but shut herself
Within her monument; looked down and sighed;
While, from her unchanged face, the silent tears
Dropt, as they had not leave, but stole their parting.
Some indistinguished words she inly murmured;
At last, she raised her eyes; and, with such looks
As dying Lucrece cast——

Ant.—My heart forebodes——

Vent.—All for the best:—Go on.

Alex.—She snatched her poniard,
And, ere we could prevent the fatal blow,
Plunged it within her breast; then turned to me:
Go, bear my lord, said she, my last farewell;
And ask him, if he yet suspect my faith.
More she was saying, but death rushed betwixt.
She half pronounced your name with her last breath,
And buried half within her.

Vent.—Heaven be praised!

Ant.—Then art thou innocent, my poor dear love,
And art thou dead?
O those two words! their sound should be divided.
Hadst thou been false, and died; or hadst thou lived,
And hadst been true—But innocence and death!
This shows not well above. Then what am I,
The murderer of this truth, this innocence!
Thoughts cannot form themselves in words so horrid
As can express my guilt!

Vent.—Is't come to this? The gods have been too gracious;
And thus you thank them for it!

Ant. (to Alex.).—Why stayest thou here?
Is it for thee to spy upon my soul,
And see its inward mourning? Get thee hence;
Thou art not worthy to behold, what now
Becomes a Roman emperor to perform.

Alex.—He loves her still:
His grief betrays it. Good! the joy to find
She's yet alive, completes the reconcilement.
I've saved myself, and her. But, oh! the Romans!
Fate comes too fast upon my wit,
Hunts me too hard, and meets me at each double.
(Aside. Exit.

Vent.—Would she had died a little sooner, though!
Before Octavia went, you might have treated:
Now 'twill look tame, and would not be received.
Come, rouse yourself, and let's die warm together.

Ant.—I will not fight: there's no more work for war.
The business of my angry hours is done.
Vent.—Cæsar is at your gates.
Ant.—Why, let him enter;
He's welcome now.
Vent.—What lethargy has crept into your soul?
Ant.—'Tis but a scorn of life, and just desire
To free myself from bondage.
Vent.—Do it bravely.
Ant.—I will; but not by fighting. O Ventidius!
What should I fight for now?—my queen is dead.
I was but great for her; my power, my empire,
Were but my merchandise to buy her love;
And conquered kings, my factors. Now she's dead,
Let Cæsar take the world,—
An empty circle, since the jewel's gone
Which made it worth my strife: my being's nauseous;
For all the bribes of life are gone away.
Vent.—Would you be taken?
Ant.—Yes, I would be taken;
But, as a Roman ought,—dead, my Ventidius:
For I'll convey my soul from Cæsar's reach,
And lay down life myself. 'Tis time the world
Should have a lord, and know whom to obey.
We two have kept its homage in suspense,
And bent the globe, on whose each side we trod,
Till it was dented inwards. Let him walk
Alone upon't: I'm weary of my part.
My torch is out; and the world stands before me,
Like a black desert at the approach of night:
I'll lay me down, and stray no farther on.
Vent.—I could be grieved,
But that I'll not outlive you: choose your death;
For, I have seen him in such various shapes,
I care not which I take: I'm only troubled,
The life I bear is worn to such a rag,
'Tis scarce worth giving. I could wish, indeed,
We threw it from us with a better grace;
That, like two lions taken in the toils,
We might at last thrust out our paws, and wound
The hunters that inclose us.
Ant.—I have thought on it.
Ventidius, you must live.
Vent.—I must not, sir.
Ant.—Wilt thou not live, to speak some good of me?

To stand by my fair fame, and guard the approaches
From the ill tongues of men?
Vent.—Who shall guard mine,
For living after you?
Ant.—Say, I command it.
Vent.—If we die well, our deaths will speak themselves
And need no living witness.
Ant.—Thou hast loved me,
And fain I would reward thee. I must die;
Fill me, and take the merit of my death,
To make thee friends with Cæsar.
Vent.—Thank your kindness.
You said I loved you; and in recompense,
You bid me turn a traitor: Did I think
You would have used me thus?—that I should die
With a hard thought of you?
Ant.—Forgive me, Roman.
Since I have heard of Cleopatra's death,
My reason bears no rule upon my tongue,
But lets my thoughts break all at random out.
I've thought better; do not deny me twice.
Vent.—By Heaven I will not.
Let it not be to outlive you.
Ant.—Kill me first,
And then die thou; for 'tis just thou serve
Thy friend before thyself.
Vent.—Give me your hand.
We soon shall meet again. Now, farewell, emperor!—
(Embrace.
Methinks that word's too cold to me by last:
Since death sweeps all distinctions, farewell, friend!
That's all——
I will not make a business of a trifle;
And yet I cannot look on you, and kill you;
Pray turn your face.
Ant.—I do: strike home, be sure.
Vent.—Home as my sword will reach. (Kills himself.
Ant.—Oh, thou mistak'st;
That wound was not of thine; give it me back;
Thou robb'st me of my death.
Vent.—I do indeed;
But think 'tis the first time I e'er deceived you,
If that may plead my pardon.—And you, gods,
Forgive me, if you will; for I die perjured,
Rather than kill my friend. (Dies.

Ant.—Farewell! Ever my leader, even in death!
My queen and thou have got the start of me,
And I'm the lag of honour.—Gone so soon?
Is Death no more? he used him carelessly,
With a familiar kindness: ere he knocked,
Ran to the door, and took him in his arms,
As who should say—You're welcome at all hours,
A friend need give no warning. Books had spoiled him;
For all the learned are cowards by profession.
'Tis not worth
My further thought; for death, for aught I know,
Is but to think no more. Here's to be satisfied.
(Falls on his sword.
I've missed my heart. O unperforming hand!
Thou never couldst have erred in a worse time.
My fortune jades me to the last; and death,
Like a great man, takes state, and makes me wait
For my admittance.— (Trampling within.
Some, perhaps, from Cæsar:
If he should find me living, and suspect
That I played booty with my life! I'll mend
My work, ere they can reach me. (Rises upon his knees.

Enter Cleopatra, Charmion, *and* Iras

Cleo.—Where is my lord? where is he?
Char.—There he lies,
And dead Ventidius by him.
Cleo.—My fears were prophets; I am come too late.
O that accursed Alexas! (Runs to him.
Ant.—Art thou living?
Or am I dead before I knew, and thou
The first kind ghost that meets me?
Cleo.—Help me seat him.
Send quickly, send for help! (They place him in a chair.
'Ant.—I am answered.
We live both. Sit thee down, my Cleopatra:
I'll make the most I can of life, to stay
A moment more with thee.
Cleo.—How is it with you?
'Ant.—'Tis as with a man
Removing in a hurry; all packed up,
But one dear jewel that his haste forgot;
And he, for that returns upon the spur:
So I come back for thee.

Cleo.—Too long, ye heavens, you have been cruel to me:
Now show your mended faith, and give me back
His fleeting life!
Ant.—It will not be, my love;
I keep my soul by force.
Say but, thou art not false.
Cleo.—'Tis now too late
To say I'm true: I'll prove it, and die with you.
Unknown to me, Alexas feigned my death:
Which, when I knew, I hasted to prevent
This fatal consequence. My fleet betrayed
Both you and me.
Ant.—And Dolabella——
Cleo.—Scarce
Esteemed before he loved; but hated now.
Ant.—Enough: my life's not long enough for more
Thou say'st, thou wilt come after: I believe thee;
For can now believe whate'er thou sayest,
That we may part more kindly.
Cleo.—I will come:
Doubt not, my life, I'll come, and quickly too:
Cæsar shall triumph o'er no part of thee.
Ant.—But grieve not, while thou stayest,
My last disastrous times:
Think we have had a clear and glorious day
And Heaven did kindly to delay the storm,
Just till our close of evening. Ten years' love,
And not a moment lost, but all improved
To the utmost joys,—what ages have we lived?
And now to die each other's; and, so dying,
While hand in hand we walk in groves below,
Whole troops of lovers' ghosts shall flock about us,
And all the train be ours.
Cleo.—Your words are like the notes of dying swans,
Too sweet to last. Were there so many hours
For your unkindness, and not one for love?
Ant.—No, not a minute.—This one kiss—more worth
Than all I leave to Cæsar. (Dies.
Cleo.—O tell me so again,
And take ten thousand kisses for that word.
My lord, my lord! speak, if you yet have being;
Sign to me, if you cannot speak; or cast
One look! Do anything that shows you live.
Iras.—He's gone too far to hear you;
And this you see, a lump of senseless clay,

The leavings of a soul.
Char.—Remember, madam,
He charged you not to grieve.
Cleo.—And I'll obey him.
I have not loved a Roman, not to know
What should become his wife; his wife, my Charmion!
For 'tis to that high title I aspire;
And now I'll not die less. Let dull Octavia
Survive, to mourn him dead: My nobler fate
Shall knit our spousals with a tie, too strong
For Roman laws to break.
Iras.—Will you then die?
Cleo.—Why shouldst thou make that question?
Iras.—Cæsar is merciful.
Cleo.—Let him be so
To those that want his mercy: My poor lord
Made no such covenant with him, to spare me
When he was dead. Yield me to Cæsar's pride?
What! to be led in triumph through the streets,
A spectacle to base plebeian eyes;
While some dejected friend of Antony's,
Close in a corner, shakes his head, and mutters
A secret curse on her who ruined him!
I'll none of that.
Char—Whatever you resolve,
I'll follow, even to death.
Iras.—I only feared
For you; but more should fear to live without you.
Cleo.—Why, now, 'tis as it should be. Quick, my friends,
Despatch; ere this, the town's in Cæsar's hands:
My lord looks down concerned, and fears my stay,
Lest I should be surprised;
Keep him not waiting for his love too long.
You, Charmion, bring my crown and richest jewels:
With them, the wreath of victory I made
(Vain augury!) for him, who now lies dead:
You, Iras, bring the cure of all our ills.
Iras.—The aspics, madam?
Cleo.—Must I bid you twice? (Exit Charmion and Iris.
'Tis sweet to die, when they would force life on me,
To rush into the dark abode of death,
And seize him first; if he be like my love,
He is not frightful, sure.
We're now alone, in secrecy and silence;
And is not this like lovers? I may kiss

These pale, cold lips; Octavia does not see me:
And, oh! 'tis better far to have him thus,
Than see him in her arms.—Oh, welcome, welcome!

Enter CHARMION *and* IRAS

Char.—What must be done?
Cleo.—Short ceremony, friends;
But yet it must be decent. First, this laurel
Shall crown my hero's head: he fell not basely,
Nor left his shield behind him.—Only thou
Couldst triumph o'er thyself; and thou alone
Wert worthy so to triumph.
Char.—To what end
These ensigns of your pomp and royalty?
Cleo.—Dull, that thou art! why 'tis to meet my love;
As when I saw him first, on Cydnus' bank,
All sparkling, like a goddess: so adorned,
I'll find him once again; my second spousals
Shall match my first in glory. Haste, haste, both,
And dress the bride of Antony.
Char.—'Tis done.
Cleo.—Now seat me by my lord. I claim this place;
For I must conquer Cæsar too, like him,
And win my share of the world—Hail, you dear relics
Of my immortal love!
O let no impious hand remove you hence:
But rest for ever here! Let Egypt give
His death that peace, which it denied his life.—
Reach me the casket.
Iras.—Underneath the fruit
The aspic lies.
Cleo.—Welcome, thou kind deceiver! (Putting aside the leaves.
Thou best of thieves; who, with an easy key,
Dost open life, and, unperceived by us,
Even steal us from ourselves; discharging so
Death's dreadful office, better than himself;
Touching our limbs so gently into slumber,
That Death stands by, deceived by his own image,
And thinks himself but sleep.
Serap.—The queen, where is she? (Within.
The town is yielded, Cæsar's at the gates.
Cleo. He comes too late to invade the rights of death.
Haste, bare my arm, and rouse the serpent's fury.
(Holds out her arm, and draws it back.
Coward flesh.

Wouldst thou conspire with Cæsar to betray me,
As thou wert none of mine? I'll force thee to it,
And not be sent by him,
But bring, myself, my soul to Antony.
(Turns aside, and then shows her arm bloody.
Take hence; the work is done.

Serap.—Break ope the door, (Within.
And guard the traitor well.

Char.—The next is ours.

Iras.—Now, Charmion, to be worthy
Of our great queen and mistress. (They apply the aspics

Cleo.—Already, death, I feel thee in my veins:
I go with such a will to find my lord,
That we shall quickly meet.
A heavy numbness creeps through every limb,
And now 'tis at my head: My eyelids fall
And my dear love is vanquished in a mist.
Where shall I find him, where? O turn me to him,
And lay me on his breast!—Cæsar, thy worst;
Now part us, if thou canst. (Dies.

(Iras sinks down at her feet, and dies; Charmion stands behind her chair, as dressing her head

Enter Serapion, *two Priests,* Alexas *bound Egyptians.*

Priest.—Behold, Serapion,
What havoc death has made!

Serap.—'Twas what I feared.—
Charmion, is this well done?

Char.—Yes, 'tis well done, and like a queen, the last
Of her great race: I follow her. (Sinks down: dies.

Alex.—'Tis true,
She has done well: Much better thus to die,
Than live to make a holiday in Rome.

Serap.—See how the lovers sit in state together,
As they were giving laws to half mankind!
The impression of a smile, left in her face,
Shows she died pleased with him for whom she lived,
And went to charm him in another world.
Cæsar's just entering: grief has now no leisure.
Secure that villain, as our pledge of safety,
To grace the imperial triumph.—Sleep, blest pair,
Secure from human chance, long ages out,
While all the storms of fate fly o'er your tomb:
And fame to late posterity shall tell,
No lovers lived so great, or died so well. (Exeunt.

EPILOGUE

Poets, like disputants, when reasons fail,
Have one sure refuge left—and that's to rail.
Fop, coxcomb, fool, are thundered through the pit;
And this is all their equipage of wit.
We wonder how the devil this difference grows,
Betwixt our fools in verse, and yours in prose:
For, 'faith, the quarrel rightly understood,
'Tis civil war with their own flesh and blood.
The threadbare author hates the gaudy coat;
And swears at the guilt coach, but swears afoot:
For 'tis observed of every scribbling man,
He grows a fop as fast as e'er he can;
Prunes up, and asks his oracle, the glass,
If pink or purple best become his face.
For our poor wretch, he neither rails nor prays;
Nor likes your wit just as you like his plays;
He has not yet so much of Mr. Bayes.
He does his best; and if he cannot please,
Would quietly sue out his *writ of ease*.
Yet, if he might his own grand jury call,
By the fair sex he begs to stand or fall.
Let Cæsar's power the men's ambition move,
But grace you him who lost the world for love!
Yet if some antiquated lady say,
The last age is not copied in his play;
Heaven help the man who for that face must drudge,
Which only has the wrinkles of a judge.
Let not the young and beauteous join with those;
For should you raise such numerous hosts of foes,
Young wits and sparks he to his aid must call;
'Tis more than one man's work to please you all.

SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER

[*She Stoops to Conquer* was produced at Convent Garden, Monday, the 15th March, 1773. It was played twelve times before the conclusion of the season (31st May), the tenth representation (5th May) being commanded by the King and Queen. On the 26th March it was published in *octavo* by Francis Newberry, at the corner of St. Paul's Churchyard, with the following title:—*She Stoops to Conquer: or, The Mistakes of a Night. A Comedy. As it is acted at the Theatre-Royal in Convent Garden. Written by Doctor Goldsmith.* The price was one shilling and sixpence. The present reprint is from the fourth edition which appeared in the same year as the first.]

SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER

OR

THE MISTAKES OF A NIGHT

A COMEDY

(Oliver Goldsmith, British poet and dramatist, and man-of-letters, was born in Pallas, Longford, Ireland, 1728, the son of an Irish clergyman. He was educated at Trinity College, Dublin and afterwards studied medicine at Edinburgh and Leyden. He wandered, on foot, all over Europe, and failing at everything he undertook, he returned to London where he turned bookseller's hack. After severe struggles, Goldsmith began to be known in literary circles and made the acquaintance of Burke, Reynolds, Garrick, and others. Goldsmith was plain looking; generous to a fault; extremely foolish in most of his actions; lacking in the ability to make money systematically, or to take care of it when he did make it; but he was beloved by everybody. His "Vicar of Wakefield," 1766, a well known work to this day, is one of the masterpieces of English fiction, and his brilliant comedy, "She Stoops to Conquer," still maintains its popularity! One of its poems, "The Deserted Village," is now very popular and will not be readily forgotten. He wrote many other works—histories, biographies, essays, and to term it as Johnson, another writer of his age, does "he left scarcely any style of writing untouched and touched nothing that he did not adorn." Goldsmith died in 1774.)

TO SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.

DEAR SIR,

By inscribing this slight performance to you, I do not mean so much to compliment you as myself. It may do me some honour to inform the public, that I have lived many years in intimacy with you. It may serve the interests of mankind also to inform them, that the greatest wit may be found in a character, without impairing the most unaffected piety.

I have, particularly, reason to thank you for your partiality to this performance. The undertaking a comedy, not merely sentimental, was very dangerous; and Mr. Colman, who saw this piece in its various stages, always thought it so. However, I ventured to trust it to the public; and, though it was necessarily delayed till late in the season, I have every reason to be grateful.

I am, dear sir,
Your most sincere friend
And admirer,
OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

PROLOGUE

BY DAVID GARRICK, ESQ.

Enter. Mr. WOODWARD, *dressed in black, and holding a Handkerchief to his Eyes.*

EXCUSE me, sirs, I pray—I can't yet speak—
I'm crying now—and have been all the week!
'Tis not alone this mourning suit, good masters,
I've that within—for which there are no plasters!
Pray would you know the reason why I'm crying?
The Comic muse, long sick, is now a-dying!
And if she goes, my tears will never stop:
For as a player, I can't squeeze out one drop:
I am undone, that's all—shall lose my bread—
I'd rather, but that's nothing—lose my head.
When the sweet maid is laid upon the bier,
Shuter and *I* shall be chief mourners here.
To *her* a mawkish drab of spurious breed,
Who deals in *sentimentals* will succeed!
Poor *Ned* and I are dead to all intents,
We can as soon speak *Greek* as *sentiments!*
Both nervous grown, to keep our spirits up,
We now and then take down a hearty cup.
What shall we do?—If Comedy forsake us!
They'll turn us out, and no one else will take us,
But why can't I be moral?—Let me try—
My heart thus pressing—fix'd my face and eye—
With a sententious look, that nothing means
(Faces are blocks, in sentimental scenes),
Thus I begin—*All is not gold that glitters,*
Pleasure seems sweet, but proves a glass of bitters.
When ignorance enters, folly is at hand;
Learning is better far than house and land.
Let not your virtue trip, who trips may stumble,
And virtue is not virtue, if she tumble.
I give it up—morals won't do for me;
To make you laugh I must play tragedy.
One hope remains—hearing the maid was ill,

A doctor comes this night to show his skill.
To cheer her heart, and give your muscles motion,
He in *five draughts* prepar'd, presents a potion:
A kind of magic charm—for be assur'd,
If you will *swallow* it, the maid is cur'd.
But desperate the Doctor, and her case is,
If you reject the dose, and make wry faces!
This truth he boasts, will boast it while he lives,
No *poisonous drugs* are mix'd in what he gives;
Should he succeed, you'll give him his degree;
If not, within he will receive no fee!
The college *you,* must his pretentions back,
Pronounce him *regular,* or dub him *quack.*

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MEN

Sir Charles Marlow,	Mr. Gardner.
Young Marlow (his Son)	Mr. Lewes.
Hardcastle,	Mr. Shuter.
Hastings,	Mr. Dubellamy.
Tony Lumpkin,	Mr. Quick.
Diggory,	Mr. Saunders.

WOMEN

Mrs. Hardcastle,	Mrs. Green.
Miss Hardcastle,	Mrs. Bulkley.
Miss Neville,	Mrs. Kniveton.
Maid,	Miss Willems.

Landlords, Servants, &c., &c.

(The cast given is that of the piece as first acted)

SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER

OR,

THE MISTAKES OF A NIGHT
A COMEDY

ACT I

SCENE—*A Chamber in an old fashioned House*

Enter Mrs. HARDCASTLE *and Mr.* HARDCASTLE

Mrs. Hardcastle.—I vow, Mr. Hardcastle, you're very particular. Is there a creature in the whole country, but ourselves, that does not take a trip to town now and then, to rub off the rust a little? There's the two Miss Hoggs, and our neighbour, Mrs. Grigsby, go to take a month's polishing every winter.

Hard.—Ay, and bring back vanity and affectation to last them the whole year. I wonder why London cannot keep its own fools at home. In my time, the follies of the town crept slowly among us, but now they travel faster than a stage-coach. Its fopperies come down, not only as inside passengers, but in the very basket.

Mrs. Hard.—Ay, *your* times were fine times, indeed; you have been telling us of *them* for many a long year. Here we live in an old rumbling mansion, that looks for all the world like an inn, but that we never see company. Our best visitors are old Mrs. Oddfish, the curate's wife, and little Cripplegate, the lame dancing-master: And all our entertainment your old stories of Prince Eugene and the Duke of Marlborough. I hate such old-fashioned trumpery.

Hard.—And I love it. I love everything that's old: old friends, old times, old manners, old books, old wine; and, I believe, Dorothy (taking her hand), you'll own I have been pretty fond of an old wife.

Mrs. Hard.—Lord, Mr. Hardcastle, you're for ever at your Dorothys and your old wifes. You may be a Darby, but I'll be no Joan, I promise you. I'm not so old as you'd make me, by more than one good year. Add twenty to twenty, and make money of that.

Hard.—Let me see; twenty added to twenty, makes just fifty and seven!

Mrs. Hard.—It's false, Mr. Hardcastle: I was but twenty when I was brought to bed of Tony, that I had by Mr. Lumpkin, my first husband; and he's not come to years of discretion yet.

Hard.—Nor ever will, I dare answer for him. Ay, you have taught *him* finely!

Mrs. Hard.—No matter, Tony Lampkin has a good fortune. My son is not to live by his learning. I don't think a boy wants much learning to spend fifteen hundred a year.

Hard.—Learning, quotha! A mere composition of tricks and mischief!

Mrs. Hard.—Humour, my dear: nothing but humour. Come, Mr. Hardcastle, you must allow the boy a little humour.

Hard.—I'd sooner allow him a horse-pond! If burning the footmen's shoes, frightening the maids, and worrying the kittens, be humour, he has it. It was but yesterday he fastened my wig to the back of my chair, and when I went to make a bow, I popped my bald head in Mrs. Frizzle's face!

Mrs. Hard.—And am I to blame? The poor boy was always too sickly to do any good. A school would be his death. When he comes to be a little stronger, who know what a year or two's Latin may do for him?

Hard.—Latin for him! A cat and fiddle! No, no, the ale-house and the stable are the only schools he'll ever go to!

Mrs. Hard.—Well, we must not snub the poor boy now, for I believe we shan't have him long among us. Anybody that looks in his face may see he's consumptive.

Hard.—Ay, if growing too fat be one of the symptoms.

Mrs. Hard.—He coughs sometimes.

Hard.—Yes, when his liquor goes the wrong way.

Mrs. Hard.—I'm actually afraid of his lungs.

Hard.—And truly, so am I; for he sometimes whoops like a speaking-trumpet—(TONY hallooing behind the Scenes.)—O, there he goes.—A very consumptive figure, truly!

Enter TONY, *crossing the stage*

Mrs. Mard.—Tony, where are you going, my charmer? Wont you give papa and I a little of your company, lovey?

Tony.—I'm in haste, mother, I cannot stay.

Mrs. Hard.—You shan't venture out this raw evening, my dear: You look most shockingly.

Tony.—I can't stay, I tell you. The Three Pigeons expects me down every moment. There's some fun going forward.

Hard.—Ay; the ale-house, the old place: I thought so.

Mrs. Hard.—A low, paltry set of fellows.

Tony.—Not so low, neither. There's Dick Muggins the exciseman, Jack Slang the horse doctor, Little Aminadab that grinds the music-box, and Tom Twist that spins the pewter platter.

Mrs. Hard.—Pray, my dear, disappoint them for one night at least.

Tony.—As for disappointing them, I should not much mind; but I can't abide to disappoint *myself!*

Mrs. Hard. (Detaining him.)—You shan't go.

Tony.—I will, I tell you.

Mrs. Hard.—I say you shan't.

Tony.—We'll see which is strongest, you or I.

(Exit hauling her out.

HARDCASTLE *solus*

Hard.—Ay, there goes a pair that only spoil each other. But is not the whole age in a combination to drive sense and discretion out of doors? There's my pretty darling Kate; the fashions of the times have almost infected her too. By leaving a year or two in town, she is as fond of gauze, and French frippery, as the best of them.

Enter Miss HARDCASTLE

Hard.—Blessings on my pretty innocence! Dressed out as my usual, my Kate! Goodness! What a quantity of superfluous silk hast thou got about thee, girl! I could never teach the fools of this age, that the indigent world could be clothed out of the trimmings of the vain.

Miss Hard.—You know our agreement, sir. You allow me the morning to receive and pay visits, and to dress in my own manner; and in the evening, I put on my housewife's dress, to please you.

Hard.—Well, remember, I insist on the terms of our agreement; and, by-the-bye, I believe I shall have occasion to try your obedience this very evening.

Miss Hard.—I protest, sir, I don't comprehend your meaning.

Hard.—Then to be plain with you, Kate, I expect the young gentleman I have chosen to be your husband from town this very day. I have his father's letter, in which he informs me his son is set out, and that he intends to follow himself shortly after.

Miss Hard.—Indeed! I wish I had known something of this before. Bless me, how shall I behave? It's a thousand to one I shan't like him; our meeting will be so formal, and so like a thing of business, that I shall find no room for friendship or esteem.

Hard.—Depend upon it, child, I'll never control your choice; but Mr. Marlow, whom I have pitched upon, is the son of my old friend Sir Charles Marlow, of whom you have heard me talk so often. The

young gentleman has been bred a scholar, and is designed for an employment in the service of his country. I am told he's a man of an excellent understanding.

Miss Hard.—Is he?

Hard.—Very generous.

Miss Hard.—I believe I shall like him.

Hard.—Young and brave.

Miss Hard.—I'm sure I shall like him.

Hard.—And very handsome.

Miss Hard.—My dear papa, say no more (kissing his hand), he's mine, I'll have him!

Hard.—And, to crown all, Kate, he's one of the most bashful and reserved young fellows in all the world.

Miss Hard.—Eh! you have frozen me to death again. That word reserved has undone all the rest of his accomplishments. A reserved lover, it is said, always makes a suspicious husband.

Hard.—On the contrary, modesty seldom resides in a breast that is not enriched with nobler virtues. It was the very feature in his character that first struck me.

Miss Hard.—He must have more striking features to catch me, I promise you. However, if he be so young, handsome, and so everything, as you mention, I believe he'll do still. I think I'll have him.

Hard.—Ay, Kate, but there is still an obstacle. It is more than an even wager, he may not have *you*.

Miss Hard.—My dear papa, why will you mortify one so?—Well, if he refuses, instead of breaking my heart at his indifference, I'll only break my glass for its flattery. Set my cap to some newer fashion, and look out for some less difficult admirer.

Hard.—Bravely resolved! In the meantime I'll go prepare the servants for his reception; as we seldom see company, they want as much training as a company of recruits the first day's muster. (Exit.

Miss Hardcastle *sola*

Miss Hard.—Lud, this news of papa's puts me all in a flutter. Young, handsome; these he put last; but I put them foremost. Sensible, good-natur'd; I like all that. But then reserved, and sheepish, that's much against him. Yet can't he be cured of his timidity, by being taught to be proud of his wife. Yes, and can't I— But I vow I'm disposing of the husband before I have secured the lover!

Enter Miss Neville

Miss Hard. I'm glad you're come, Neville, my dear. Tell me, Constance, how do I look this evening? Is there anything whimsi-

cal about me? Is it one of my well-looking days, child? Am I in face to-day?

Miss Neville.—Perfectly, my dear. Yet, now I look again—bless me!—sure no accident has happened among the canary birds or the goldfishes? Has your brother or the cat been meddling? Or has the last novel been too moving?

Miss Hard.—No; nothing of all this. I have been threatened—I can scarce get it out—I have been threatened with a lover!

Miss Neville. And his name——

Miss Hard.—Is Marlow.

Miss Neville.—Indeed!

Miss Hard.—The son of Sir Charles Marlow.

Miss Neville.—As I live, the most intimate friend of Mr. Hastings, my admirer. They are never asunder. I believe you must have seen him when we lived in town.

Miss Hard.—Never.

Miss Neville.—He's a very singular character, I assure you. Among women of reputation and virtue, he is the modestest man alive: but his acquaintance give him a very different character among the creatures of another stamp: you understand me?

Miss Hard.—An odd character, indeed! I shall never be able to manage him. What shall I do? Pshaw, think no more of him, but trust to occurrences for success. But how goes on your own affair, my dear? Has my mother been courting you for my brother Tony, as usual?

Miss Neville.—I have just come from one of our agreeable *tête-à-têtes*. She has been saying a hundred tender things, and setting off her pretty monster as the very pink of perfection.

Miss Hard.—And her partiality is such, that she actually thinks him so. A fortune like yours is no small temptation. Besides, as she has the sole management of it, I'm not surprised to see her unwilling to let it go out of the family.

Miss Neville.—A fortune like mine, which chiefly consists in jewels, is no such mighty temptation. But at any rate, if my dear Hastings be but constant, I make no doubt to be too hard for her at last. However, I let her suppose that I am in love with her son, and she never once dreams that my affections are fixed upon another.

Miss Hard.—My good brother holds out stoutly. I could almost love him for hating you so.

Miss Neville.—It is a good-natur'd creature at bottom, and I'm sure would wish to see me married to anybody but himself. But my aunt's bell rings for our afternoons walk through the improvements. Allons. Courage is necessary, as our affairs are critical.

Miss Hard.—Would it were bed-time and all were well. *(Exeunt*

Scene—*An Alehouse Room. Several shabby fellows, with punch*

and tobacco. TONY *at the head of the table, a little higher than the rest: a mallet in his hand.*

Omnes.—Hurrea, hurrea, hurrea, bravo!

First Fellow.—Now, gentlemen, silence for a song. The 'Squire is going to knock himself down for a song.

Omnes.—Ay, a song, a song.

Tony.—Then I'll sing you, gentlemen, a song I made upon this ale-house, the Three Pigeons.

SONG

Let school-masters puzzle their brain,
With grammar, and nonsense, and learning;
Good liquor, I stoutly maintain,
Gives *genus* a better discerning,
Let them brag of their Heathenish Gods,
Their Lethes, their Styxes, and Stygians;
Their Quis, and their Quæs, and their Quods,
They're all but a parcel of Pigeons.
Toroddle, toroddle, toroll!

When Methodist preachers come down,
A-preaching that drinking is sinful,
I'll wager the rascals a crown,
They always preach best with a skinful.
But when you come down with your pence,
For a slice of their scurvy religion,
I'll leave it to all men of sense,,
But you, my good friend, are the pigeon.
Toroddle, toroddle, toroll!

Then come, put the jorum about,
And let us be merry and clever,
Our hearts and our liquors are stout,
Here's the Three Jolly Pigeons for ever.
Let some cry up woodcock or hare,
Your bustards, your ducks, and your widgeons:
But of all the birds in the air,
Here's a health to the Three Jolly Pigeons.
Toroddle, toroddle, toroll!

Omnes.—Bravo, bravo!

First Fellow.—The 'Squire has got spunk in him.

Second Fellow.—I loves to hear him sing, bekeays he never gives nothing that's low.

Third Fellow.—O damn anything that's low, I cannot bear it!

Fourth Fellow.—The genteel thing is the genteel thing at any time. If so that a gentleman bees in a concatenation accordingly.

Third Fellow.—I like the maxum of it, Master Muggins. What, though I am obligated to dance a bear, a man may be a gentleman for all that. May this be my poison if my bear ever dances but to the very genteelest of tunes. Water Parted, or the minuet in Ariadne.

Second Fellow.—What a pity it is the 'Squire is not come to his own. It would be well for all the publicans within ten miles round of him.

Tony.—Ecod, and so it would, Master Slang. I'd then show what it was to keep choice of company.

Second Fellow.— O, he takes after his own his father for that. To be sure, old 'Squire Lumpkin was the finest gentleman I ever set my eyes on. For winding the straight horn, or beating a thicket for a hare, or a wrench, he never had his fellow. It was a saying in the place, that he kept the best horses, dogs, and girls in the whole county.

Tony.—Ecod, and when I'm of age I'll be no bastard, I promise you. I have been thinking of Bet Bouncer and the miller's grey mare to begin with. But come, my boys, drink about and be merry, for you pay no reckoning. Well Stingo, what's the matter?

Enter LANDLORD

Landlord.—There be two gentlemen in a post-chaise at the door. They have lost their way upo' the forest; and they are talking about Mr. Hardcastle.

Tony.—As sure as can be, one of them must be the gentleman that's coming down to court my sister. Do they seem to be Londoners?

Landlord.—I believe they may. They look woundily like Frenchmen.

Tony.—Then desire them to step this way, and I'll set them right in a twinkling. *(Exit Landlord).* Gentlemen, as they mayn't be good enough company for you, step down for a moment, and I'll be with you in the squeezing of a lemon. *(Exeunt Mob.*

TONY *solus*

Tony.—Father-in-law has been calling me whelp, and hound, this half year. Now, if I pleased, I could be so revenged upon the old grumbletonian. But then I'm afraid—afraid of what? I shall soon be worth fifteen hundred a year, and let him frighten me out of that if he can!

Enter LANDLORD, *conducting* MARLOW *and* HASTINGS

Marlow.—What a tedious uncomfortable day have we had of it! We were told it was but forty miles across the country, and we have come above threescore!

Hastings.—And all, Marlow, from that unaccountable reserve of yours, that would not let us enquire more frequently on the way.

Marlow.—I own, Hastings, I am unwilling to lay myself under an obligation to every one I meet; and often stand the chance of an unmannerly answer.

Hastings.—At present, however, we are not likely to receive any answer.

Tony.—No offence, gentlemen. But I'm told you have been enquiring for one Mr. Hardcastle, in these parts. Do you know what part of the country you are in?

Hastings.—Not in the least, sir, but should thank you for information.

Tony.—Nor the way you came?

Hastings.—No, sir, but if you can inform us——

Tony.—Why gentlemen, if you know neither the road you are going, nor where you are, nor the road you came, the first thing I have to inform is, that—you have lost your way.

Marlow.—We wanted no ghost to tell us that.

Tony.—Pray, gentlemen, may I be so bold as to ask the place from whence you came?

Marlow.—That's not necessary towards directing us where we are to go.

Tony.—No offence; but question for question is all fair, you know. Pray, gentlemen, is not this same Hardcastle a cross-grained, old-fashioned, whimsical fellow with an ugly face; a daughter, and a pretty son?

Hastings.—We have not seen the gentleman, but he has the family you mention.

Tony.—The daughter, a tall, trapesing, trolloping, talkative maypole—— The son, a pretty, well-bred, agreeable youth, that everybody is fond of!

Marlow.—Our information differs in this. The daughter is said to be well-bred and beautiful; the son, an awkward booby, reared up and spoiled at his mother's apron-string.

Tony.—He-he-hem—then, gentlemen, all I have to tell you is, that you won't reach Mr. Hardcastle's house this night, I believe.

Hastings.—Unfortunate!

Tony.—It's a damned long, dark, boggy, dirty, dangerous way. Stingo, tell the gentlemen the way to Mr. Hardcastle's. *(Winking*

upon the Landlord.) Mr. Hardcastle's of Quagmire Marsh, you understand me.

Landlord.—Master Hardcastle's! Lack-a-daisy, my masters, you're come a deadly deal wrong! When you came to the bottom of the hill, you should have crossed down Squash Lane.

Marlow.—Cross down Squash Lane!

Landlord.—Then you were to keep straight forward, until you came to four roads.

Marlow.—Come to where four roads meet!

Tony.—Ay, but you must be sure to take only one of them.

Marlow.—O, sir, you're facetious!

Tony.—Then, keeping to the right, you are to go sideways till you come upon Crack-skull common: there you must look sharp for the track of the wheel, and go forward, till you come to farmer Murrain's barn. Coming to the farmer's barn, you are to turn to the right, and then to the left, and then to the right about again, till you find out the old mill——

Marlow.—Zounds, man! we could as soon find out the longitude!

Hastings.—What's to be done, Marlow?

Marlow.—This house promises but a poor reception, though perhaps, the landlord can accommodate us.

Landlord.—Alack master, we have but one spare bed in the whole house.

Tony.—And to my knowledge, that's taken up by three lodgers already. (After a pause, in which the rest seem disconcerted.) I have hit it. Don't you think, Stingo, our landlady could accommodate the gentlemen by the fire-side, with——three chairs and a bolster?

Hastings.—I hate sleeping by the fire-side.

Marlow.—And I detest your three chairs and a bolster.

Tony.—You do, do you?—then let me see—what—if you go on a mile further, to the Buck's Head; the old Buck's Head on the hill, one of the best inns in the whole country?

Hastings.—Oh, oh! so we have escaped an adventure for this night, however.

Landlord (apart to Tony).—Sure, you ben't sending them to your father's as an inn, be you?

Tony.—Mum, you fool, you. Let them find that out. (To them). You have only to keep on straight forward, till you come to a large old house by the roadside. You'll see a pair of large horns over the door. That's the sign. Drive up the yard, and call stoutly about you.

Hastings.—Sir, we are obliged to you. The servants can't miss the way?

Tony.—No, no: But I tell you though, the landlord is rich, and

going to leave off business; so he wants to be thought a gentleman, saving your presence, he! he! he! He'll be for giving you his company, and ecod, if you mind him, he'll persuade you that his mother was an alderman, and his aunt a justice of the peace!

Landlord.—A troublesome old blade, to be sure; but 'a keeps as good wines and beds, as any in the whole country.

Marlow.—Well, if he supplies us with these, we shall want no further connection. We are to turn to the right, did you say?

Tony.—No, no; straight forward. I'll just step myself, and show you a piece of the way. (To the Landlord.) Mum.

Landlord.—Ah, bless your heart, for a sweet, pleasant——damned mischievous son of a whore.

(Exeunt.

END OF THE FIRST ACT

ACT II

SCENE—*An old-fashioned House*

Enter HARDCASTLE, *followed by three or four awkward Servants*

Hard.—Well, I hope you're perfect in the table exercise I have been teaching you these three days. You all know your posts and places, and can show that you have been used to good company, without ever stirring from home.

Omnes.—Ay, ay.

Hard.—When company comes, you are not to pop out and stare, and then run in again, like frightened rabbits in a warren.

Omnes.—No, no.

Hard.—You, Diggory, whom I have taken from the barn are to make a show at the side-table; and you; Roger, whom I have advanced from the plough, are to place yourself behind my chair. But you're not to stand so, with your hands in your pockets. Take your hands from your pockets, Roger; and from your head, you blockhead, you. See how Diggory carries his hands. They're a little too stiff, indeed, but that's no great matter.

Diggory.—Ay, mind how I hold them. I learned to hold my hands this way, when I was upon drill for the militia. And so being upon drill——

Hard.—You must not be so talkative, Diggory. You must be all attention to the guests. You must hear us talk, and not think of talking; you must see us drink and not think of drinking; you must see us eat and not think of eating.

Diggory.—By the laws, your worship, that's parfectly unpossible.

Whenever Diggory sees yeating going forward, ecod, he's always wishing for a mouthful himself.

Hard.—Blockhead! Is not a bellyful in the kitchen as good as a bellyful in the parlor? Stay your stomach with that reflection.

Diggory.—Ecod, I thank your worship, I'll make a shift to stay my stomach with a slice of cold beef in the pantry.

Hard.—Diggory, you are too talkative. Then, if I happen to say a good thing, or tell a good story at table, you must not all burst out-a-laughing, as if you made part of the company.

Diggory.—Then, ecod, your worship must not tell the story of Ould Grouse in the gun-room: I can't help laughing at that—he! he! he!—for the soul of me! We have laughed at that these twenty years—ha! ha! ha!

Hard.—Ha! ha! ha! The story is a good one. Well, honest Diggory, you may laugh at that—but still remember to be attentive. Suppose one of the company should call for a glass of wine, how will you behave? A glass of wine, sir, if you please (to Diggory)—Eh, why don't you move?

Diggory.—Ecod, your worship, I never have courage till I see the eatables and drinkables brought upo' the table, and then I'm as bauld as a lion.

Hard.—What, will nobody move?

First Servant.—I'm not to leave this pleace.

Second Servant.—I'm sure its no pleace of mine.

Third Servant.—Nor mine for sartain.

Diggory.—Wauns, and I'm sure it canna be mine.

Hard.—You numskulls and so while, like your betters, you are quarrelling for places, the guests must be starved. O, you dunces! I find I must begin all over again.—But don't I hear a coach drive into the yard? To your posts, you blockheads! I'll go in the meantime and give my old friend's son a hearty reception at the gate.

(Exit HARDCASTLE.

Diggory.—By the elevens, my pleace is gone quite out of my head!

Roger.—I know that my pleace is to be everywhere!

First Servant.—Where the devil is mine?

Second.—My pleace is to be nowhere at all; and so I ze go about my business!

(Exeunt Servants, running about as if frighted, different ways.

Enter SERVANTS *with Candles, showing in* MARLOW *and* HASTINGS

Servant.—Welcome, gentlemen, very welcome. This way.

Hastings.—After the disappointments of the day, welcome once more, Charles, to the comforts of a clean room and a good fire. Upon my word, a very well-looking house; antique but creditable.

Marlow. The usual fate of a large mansion. Having first ruined the master of good housekeeping, it at last comes to levy contributions as an inn.

Hastings.—As you say, we passengers are to be taxed to pay all these fineries. I have often seen a good side-board, or a marble chimney-piece, though not actually put in the bill, inflame a reckoning confoundedly.

Marlow.—Travellers, George, must pay in all places. The only difference is, that in good inns, you pay dearly for luxuries; in bad inns, you are fleeced and starved.

Hastings.—You have lived pretty much among them. In truth, I have been surprised, that you who have seen so much of the world, with your natural good sense, and your many opportunities, could never yet acquire a requisite share of assurance.

Marlow.—The Englishman's malady. But tell me, George, where could I have learned that assurance you talk of? My life has been chiefly spent in a college, or an inn, in seclusion from that lovely part of the creation that chiefly teach men confidence. I don't know that I was ever familiarly acquainted with a single modest woman—except my mother—but among females of another class, you know—

Hastings.—Ay, among them you are impudent enough of all conscience!

Marlow.—They are of us, you know.

Hastings.—But in the company of women of reputation I never saw such an idiot, such a trembler; you look for all the world as if you wanted an opportunity of stealing out of the room.

Marlow.—Why, man, that's because I do want to steal out of the room. Faith, I have often formed a resolution to break the ice, and rattle away at any rate. But I don't how, a single glance from a pair of fine eyes has totally overset my resolution. An impudent fellow may counterfeit modesty, but I'll be hanged if a modest man can ever counterfeit impudence.

Hastings.—If you could but say half the fine things to them that I have heard you lavish upon the barmaid of an inn, or even a college bedmaker—

Marlow.—Why, George, I can't say fine things to them. They freeze, they petrify me. They may talk of a comet, or a burning mountain, or some such bagatelle. But to me, a modest woman, dressed out in all her finery, is the most tremendous object of the whole creation.

Hastings.—Ha! ha! ha! At this rate, man, how can you ever expect to marry!

Marlow.—Never, unless, as among kings and princes, my bride were to be courted by proxy. If, indeed, like an Eastern bridegroom, one were to be introduced to a wife he never saw before, it might be endured. But to go through all the terrors of a formal courtship, together with the episode of aunts, grandmothers and cousins, and at last to blurt out the broad staring question of, madam, will you marry me? No, no, that's a strain much above me, I assure you!

Hastings.—I pity you. But how do you intend behaving to the lady you are come down to visit at the request of your father?

Marlow.—As I behave to all other ladies. Bow very low. Answer yes, or no, to all her demands—But for the rest, I don't think I shall venture to look in her face, till I see my father's again.

Hastings.—I'm surprised that one who is so warm a friend can be so cool a lover.

Marlow.—To be explicit, my dear Hastings, my chief inducement down was to be instrumental in forwarding your happiness, not my own. Miss Neville loves you, the family don't know you, as my friend you are sure of a reception, and let honour do the rest.

Hastings.—My dear Marlow! But I'll suppress the emotion. Were I a wretch, meanly seeking to carry off a fortune, you should be the last man in the world I would apply to for assistance. But Miss Neville's person is all I ask, and that is mine, both from her deceased father's consent and her own inclination.

Marlow.—Happy man! You have talents and art to captivate any woman. I'm doomed to adore the sex, and yet to converse with the only part of it I despise. This stammer in my address, and this awkward prepossessing visage of mine, can never permit me to soar above the reach of a milliner's apprentice, or one of the duchesses of Drury Lane. Pshaw! this fellow here to interrupt us.

Enter HARDCASTLE

Hard.—Gentlemen, once more you are heartily welcome. Which is Mr. Marlow? Sir, you're heartily welcome. It's not my way, you see, to receive my friends with my back to the fire. I like to give them a hearty reception in the old style at my gate. I like to see their horses and trunks taken care of.

Marlow (aside).—He has got our names from the servants already. (To him.) We approve your caution and hospitality, sir. (To Hastings.) I have been thinking, George, of changing our travelling dresses in the morning. I am grown confoundedly ashamed of mine.

Hard.—I beg, Mr. Marlow, you'll use no ceremony in this house.

Hastings.—I fancy, George, you're right: the first blow is half the battle. I intend opening the campaign with the white and gold.

Hard.—Mr. Marlow—Mr. Hastings—gentlemen—pray be under no constraint in this house. This is Liberty Hall, gentlemen. You may do just as you please here.

Marlow.—Yet, George if we open the campaign too fiercely at first, we may want ammunition before it is over. I think to reserve the embroidery to secure a retreat.

Hard.—Your talking of a retreat, Mr. Marlow, puts me in mind of the Duke of Marlborough, when we went to besiege Denain. He first summoned the garrison——

Marlow.—Don't you think the *ventre d'or* waistcoat will do with the plain brown.

Hard.—He first summoned the garrison, which might consist of about five thousand men——

Hastings.—I think not: brown and yellow mix but very poorly.

Hard.—I say, gentlemen, as I was telling you, he summoned the garrison, which might consist of about five thousand men——

Marlow.—The girls like finery.

Hard.—Which might consist of about five thousand men, well appointed with stores, ammunition, and other implements of war. "Now," says the Duke of Marlborough to George Brooks, that stood next to him—you must have heard of George Brooks; "I'll pawn by Dukedom," says he, "but I take that garrison without spilling a drop of blood!" So——

Marlow.—What, my good friend, if you gave us a glass of punch in the meantime, it would help us to carry on the siege with vigour.

Hard.—Punch, sir!——(Aside.) This is the most unaccountable kind of modesty I ever met with!

Marlow.—Yes, sir, punch! A glass of warm punch, after our journey, will be comfortable. This is Liberty Hall, you know.

Hard.—Here's cup, sir.

Marlow (aside).—So this fellow, in his Liberty Hall, will only let us have just what he pleases.

Hard. (taking the cup)—I hope you'll find it to your mind. I have prepared it with my own hands, and I believe you'll own the ingredients are tolerable. Will you be so good as to pledge me, sir? Here, Mr. Marlow, here is our better acquaintance! (Drinks.

Marlow (aside).—A very impudent fellow this! but he's a character, and I'll humour him a little. Sir, my service to you. (Drinks.

Hastings (aside).—I see this fellow wants to give us his company, and forgets that he's an innkeeper, before he has learned to be a gentleman.

Marlow.—From the excellence of your cup, my old friend, I

suppose you have a good deal of business in this part of the country. Warm work, now and then, at elections, I suppose?

Hard.—No, sir, I have long given that work over. Since our betters have hit upon the expedient of electing each other, there's no business for us that sell ale.

Hastings.—So, then you have no turn for politics, I find.

Hard.—Not in the least. There was a time, indeed, I fretted myself about the mistakes of government, like other people; but finding myself every day grow more angry, and the government growing no better, I left it to mend itself. Since that, I no more trouble my head about Heyder Ally, Ally Cawn, than about Ally Croker. Sir, my service to you.

Hastings.—So that, with eating above stairs, and drinking below, with receiving your friends within, and amusing them without, you lead a good pleasant bustling life of it.

Hard.—I do stir about a great deal, that's certain. Half the differences of the parish are adjusted in this very parlour.

Marlow (after drinking).—And you have an argument in your cup, old gentleman, better than any in Westminster Hall.

Hard.—Ay, young gentleman, that, and a little philosophy.

Marlow (aside).—Well, this is the first time I ever heard of an innkeeper's philosophy.

Hastings.—So then, like an experienced general, you attack them on every quarter. If you find their reason manageable, you attack it with your philosophy; if you find they have no reason, you attack them with this. Here's your health, my philosopher. (Drinks.

Hard.—Good, very good, thank you; ha! ha! Your generalship puts me in mind of Prince Eugene, when he fought the Turks at the battle of Belgrade. You shall hear.

Marlow.—Instead of the battle of Belgrade, I believe its' almost time to talk about supper. What has your philosophy got in the house for supper?

Hard.—For supper, sir!——(Aside.) Was ever such a request to a man in his own house!

Marlow.—Yes, sir, supper, sir; I begin to feel an appetite. I shall make devilish work to-night in the larder, I promise you.

Hard (aside).—Such a brazen dog sure never my eyes beheld. (To him.) Why, really, sir, as for supper I can't well tell. My Dorothy, and the cook maid, settle these things between them. I leave these kind of things entirely to them.

Marlow.—You do, do you?

Hard.—Entirely. By-the-bye, I believe they are in actual consultation upon what's for supper this moment in the kitchen.

Marlow.—Then I beg they'll admit me as one of their privy council.

It's a way I have got. When I travel, I always choose to regulate my own supper. Let the cook be called. No offence, I hope, sir.

Hard.—O, no, sir, none in the least; yet, I don't know how: our Bridget, the cook maid, is not very communicate upon these occasions. Should we send for her, she might scold us all out of the house.

Hastings.—Let's see your list of the larder, then. I ask it as a favour. I always match my appetite to my bill of fare.

Marlow (To Hardcastle, who looks at them with surprise).—Sir, he's very right, and it's my way, too.

Hard.—Sir, you have a right to command here. Here, Roger, bring us the bill of fare for to-night's supper.—I believe it's drawn out. Your manner, Mr. Hastings, puts me in mind of my uncle, Colonel Wallop. It was a saying of his, that no man was sure of his supper till he had eaten it.

Hastings (aside).—All upon the high ropes! His uncle a colonel! We shall soon hear of his mother being a justice of peace. But let's hear the bill of fare.

Marlow (Perusing).—What's here? For the first course; for the second course; for the desert. The devil, sir, do you think we have brought down the whole Joiner's Company, or the Corporation of Bedford, to eat up such a supper? Two or three little things, clean and comfortable, will do.

Hastings.—But let's hear it.

Marlow (reading).—For the first course at the top, a pig, and prune sauce.

Hastings.—Damn your pig, I say!

Marlow.—And damn your prune sauce, say I!

Hard.—And yet, gentlemen, to men that are hungry, pig, with prune sauce, is very good eating.

Marlow.—At the bottom, a calf's tongue and brains.

Hastings.—Let your brains be knocked out, my good sir; I don't like them.

Marlow.—Or you may clap them on a plate by themselves, I do.

Hard. (aside).—Their impudence confounds me. (To them.) Gentlemen, you are my guests, make what alterations you please. Is there anything else you wish to retrench or alter, gentlemen?

Marlow.—Item. A pork pie, a boiled rabbit and sausages, a Florentine, a shaking pudding, and a dish of tiff—taff—taffety cream!

Hastings.—Confound your made dishes, I shall be as much at a loss in this house as at a green and yellow dinner at the French ambassador's table. I'm for plain eating.

Hard.—I'm sorry, gentlemen, that I have nothing you like, but if there be anything you have a particular fancy to——

Marlow.—Why, really, sir, your bill of fare is so exquisite, that any one part of it is full as good as another. Send us what you please. So much for supper. And now to see that our beds are aired, and properly taken care of.

Hard.—I entreat you'll leave all that to me. You shall not stir a step.

Marlow.—Leave that to you! I protest, sir, you must excuse me, I always look to these things myself.

Hard—I must insist, sir, you'll make yourself easy on that head.

Marlow.—You see I'm resolved on it.—(Aside.) A very troublesome fellow this, as ever I met with.

Hard.—Well, sir, I'm resolved at least to attend you.—(Aside.) This may be modern modesty, but I never saw anything look so like old-fashioned impudence.

(Exeunt Marlow and Hardcastle.

HASTINGS *solus*

Hastings.—So I find this fellow's civilities begin to grow troublesome. But who can be angry at those assiduities which are meant to please him! Miss Neville, by all that's happy!

Enter Miss NEVILLE

Miss Neville.—My dear Hastings! To what unexpected good fortune? to what accident am I to ascribe this happy meeting?

Hastings.—Rather let me ask the same question, as I could never have hoped to meet my dearest Constance at an inn.

Miss Neville.—An inn! sure you mistake! my aunt, my guardian, lives here. What could induce you to think this house an inn?

Hastings.—My friend, Mr. Marlow, with whom I came down, and I, have been sent here as to an inn, I assure you. A young fellow whom we accidentally met at a house hard by directed us hither.

Miss Neville.—Certainly it must be one of my hopeful cousin's tricks, of whom you have heard me talk so often, ha! ha! ha! ha!

Hastings.—He whom your aunt intends for you? He of whom I have such just apprehensions?

Miss Neville.—You have nothing to fear from him, I assure you. You'd adore him if you knew how heartily he despises me. My aunt knows it too, and has undertaken to court me for him, and actually begins to think she has made a conquest.

Hastings.—Thou dear dissembler! You must know, my Constance, I have just seized this happy opportunity of my friend's visit here to get admittance into the family. The horses that carried us down are now fatigued with their journey, but they'll soon be refreshed

and then if my dearest girl will trust in her faithful Hastings, we shall soon be landed in France, where even among slaves the laws of marriage are respected.

Miss Neville.—I have often told you, that though ready to obey you, I yet should leave my little fortune behind with reluctance. The greatest part of it was left me by my uncle, the India Director, and chiefly consists in jewels. I have been for some time persuading my aunt to let me wear them. I fancy I'm very near succeeding. The instant they are put into my possession you shall find me ready to make them and myself yours.

Hastings.—Perish the baubles! Your person is all I desire. In the meantime, my friend Marlow must not be let into his mistake. I know the strange reserve of his temper is such, that if abruptly informed of it, he would instantly quit the house before our plan was ripe for execution.

Miss Neville.—But how shall we keep him in the deception? Miss Hardcastle is just returned from walking; what if we still continue to deceive him?—This, this way—— (They confer.

Enter Marlow

Marlow.—The assiduities of these good people tease me beyond bearing. My host seems to think it ill manners to leave me alone, and so he claps not only himself, but his old-fashioned wife on my back. They talk of coming to sup with us, too; and then, I suppose, we are to run the gauntlet through all the rest of the family.—What have we got here?—

Hastings.—My dear Charles! Let me congratulate you!—The most fortunate accident!—Who do you think is just alighted?

Marlow.—Cannot guess.

Hastings.—Our mistresses, boy, Miss Hardcastle and Miss Neville. Give me leave to introduce Miss Constance Neville to your acquaintance. Happening to dine in the neighbourhood, they called, on their return to take fresh horses, here. Miss Hardcastle has just stept into the next room, and will be back in an instant. Wasn't it lucky? eh!

Marlow (aside).—I have just been mortified enough of all conscience, and here comes something to complete my embarrassment.

Hastings.—Well! but wasn't it the most fortunate thing in the world?

Marlow.—Oh! yes. Very fortunate—a most joyful encounter—— But our dresses, George, you know, are in disorder——What if we should postpone the happiness till to-morrow?——To-morrow at her own house——It will be every bit as convenient——And rather more respectful——To-morrow let it be. (Offering to go.

Miss Neville.—By no means, sir. Your ceremony will displease

her. The disorder of your dress will shew the ardour of your impatience. Besides, she knows you are in the house, and will permit you to see her.

Marlow.—O! the devil! how shall I support it? Hem! hem! Hastings, you must not go. You are to assist me, you know. I shall be confoundedly ridiculous. Yet, hang it! I'll take courage. Hem!

Hastings.—Pshaw, man! it's but the first plunge, and all's over. She's but a woman, you know.

Marlow.—And of all women, she that I dread most to encounter!

Enter Miss HARDCASTLE, *as returned from walking, a Bonnet, &c.*

Hastings (introducing them).—Miss Hardcastle, Mr. Marlow, I'm proud of bringing two persons of such merit together, that only want to know, to esteem each other.

Miss Hard. (aside).—Now, for meeting my modest gentleman with a demure face, and quite in his own manner. (After a pause, in which he appears very uneasy and disconcerted.) I'm glad of your safe arrival, sir——I'm told you had some accidents by the way.

Marlow.—Only a few, madam. Yes, we had some. Yes, madam, a good many accidents, but should be sorry——madam——or rather glad of any accidents—that are so agreeably concluded. Hem!

Hastings—(to him).—You never spoke better in your whole life. Keep it up, and I'll insure you the victory.

Miss Hard.—I'm afraid you flatter, sir. You that have seen so much of the finest company can find little entertainment in an obscure corner of the country.

Marlow (gathering courage).—I have lived, indeed, in the world, madam; but I have kept very little company. I have been but an observer upon life, madam, while others were enjoying it.

Miss Neville.—But that, I am told, is the way to enjoy it at last.

Hastings (to him).—Cicero never spoke better. Once more, and you are confirmed in assurance for ever.

Marlow (to him).—Hem! Stand by me, then, and when I'm down, throw in a word or two to set me up again.

Miss Hard.—An observer, like you, upon life, were, I fear, disagreeably employed, since you must have had much more to censure than to approve.

Marlow.—Pardon me, madam. I was always willing to be amused. The folly of most people is rather an object of mirth than uneasiness.

Hastings (to him).—Bravo, bravo. Never spoke so well in your whole life. Well, Miss Hardcastle, I see that you and Mr. Marlow are going to be very good company. I believe our being here will but embarrass the interview.

Marlow.—Not in the least, Mr. Hastings. We like your company

of all things. (To him.) Zounds! George, sure you won't go? How can you leave us?

Hastings.—Our presence will but spoil conversation, so we'll retire to the next room. (To him.) You don't consider, man, that we are to manage a little tete-a-tete of our own. (Exeunt.

Miss Hard. (after a pause).—But you have not been wholly an observer, I presume, sir. The ladies, I should hope, have employed some part of your addresses.

Marlow (replapsing into timidity).—Pardon me, madam, I—I—I—as yet have studied—only—to—deserve them.

Miss Hard.—And that some say is the very worst way to obtain them.

Marlow.—Perhaps so, madam. But I love to converse only with the more grave and sensible part of the sex.——But I'm afraid I grow tiresome.

Miss Hard.—Not at all sir; there is nothing I like so much as grave conversation myself: I could hear it for ever. Indeed, I have often been surprised how a man of sentiment could ever admire those light airy pleasures, where nothing reaches the heart.

Marlow.—It's—a disease—of the mind, madam. In the variety of tastes there must be some who, wanting a relish for—um-a-um.

Miss Hard.—I understand you, sir. There must be some, who, wanting a relish for refined pleasures, pretend to despise what they are incapable of tasting.

Marlow.—My meaning, madam, but infinitely better expressed. And I can't help observing—a——

Miss Hard. (aside). Who could ever suppose this fellow impudent upon some occasions. (To him.) You were going to observe, sir——

Marlow.—I was observing, madam——I protest, madam, I forget what I was going to observe.

Miss Hard. (aside).—I vow and so do I. (To him.) You were observing, sir, in this age of hypocrisy—something about hypocrisy, sir.

Marlow.—Yes, madam. In this age of hypocrisy, there are few who upon strict enquiry do not—a—a—a——

Miss Hard.—I understand you perfectly, sir.

Marlow (aside).—Egad! and that's more than I do myself!

Miss Hard.—You mean that in this hypocritical age there are few that do not condemn in public what they practise in private, and think they pay every debt to virtue when they praise it.

Marlow.—True, madam; those who have most virtue in their mouths, have least of it in their bosoms. But I'm sure I tire you, madam.

Miss Hard.—Not in the least, sir; there's something so agreeable

and spirited in your manner, such life and force——pray, sir, go on.

Marlow.—Yes, madam. I was saying——that there are some occasions—when a total want of courage, madam, destroys all the——and puts us——upon a——a——a——.

Miss Hard.—I agree with you entirely, a want of courage upon some occasions assumes the appearance of ignorance, and betrays us when we most want to excel. I beg you'll proceed.

Marlow.—Yes, Madam. Morally speaking, madam——but I see Miss Neville expecting us in the next room. I would not intrude for the world.

Miss Hard.—I protest, sir, I never was more agreeably entertained in all my life. Pray go on.

Marlow.—Yes, Madam. I was——But she beckons us to join her. Madam, shall do myself the honour to attend you?

Miss Hard.—Well then, I'll follow.

Marlow (aside).—This pretty smooth dialogue has done for me.

Miss HARDCASTLE *sola*

Miss Hard.—Ha! ha! ha! Was there ever such a sober sentimental interview? I'm certain he scarce looked in my face the whole time. Yet the fellow, but for his unaccountable bashfulness, is pretty well, too. He has good sense, but then so buried in his fears, that it fatigues one more than ignorance. If I could teach him a little confidence, it would be doing somebody that I know of a piece of service. But who is that somebody?—that, faith, is a question I can scarce answer. (Exit.

Enter TONY *and Miss* NEVILLE, *followed by Mrs.* HARDCASTLE *and* HASTINGS

Tony.—What do you follow me for, cousin Con? I wonder you're not ashamed to be so very engaging.

Miss Neville.—I hope, cousin, one may speak to one's own relations, and not be to blame.

Tony.—Ay, but I know what sort of a relation you want to make me, though; but it won't do. I tell you, cousin Con, it won't do, so I beg you'll keep your distance, I want no nearer relationship.

(She follows coquetting him to the back scene.

Mrs. Hard.—Well! I vow, Mr. Hastings, you are very entertaining. There's nothing in the world I love to talk of so much as London, and the fashions, though I was never there myself.

Hastings.—Never there! You amaze me! From your air and manner, I concluded you had been bred all your life either at Ranelagh, St. James's, or Tower Wharf.

Mrs. Hard.—O! sir, you're only pleased to say so. We country

persons can have no manner at all. I'm in love with the town, and that serves to raise me above some of our neighbouring rustics; but who can have a manner, that has never seen the Pantheon, the Grotto Gardens, the Borough, and such places where the nobility chiefly resort? All I can do is to enjoy London at second-hand. I take care to know every tete-a-tete from the Scandalous Magazine, and have all the fashions as they come out, in a letter from the two Miss Rickets of Crooked Lane. Pray how do you like this head, Mr. Hastings?

Hastings.—Extremely elegant and *degagée,* upon my word, madam. Your *friseur* is a Frenchman, I suppose?

Mrs. Hard.—I protest, I dressed it myself from a print in the Ladies' Memorandum-book for the last year.

Hastings.—Indeed. Such a head in a side-box, at the Play-house, would draw as many gazers as my Lady Mayoress at a City Ball.

Mrs. Hard.—I vow, since inoculation began, there is no such thing to be seen as a plain woman; so one must dress a little particular or one may escape in the crowd.

Hastings.—But that can never be your case, madam, in any dress! (Bowing.)

Mrs. Hard.—Yet, what signifies my dressing when I have such a piece of antiquity by my side as Mr. Hardcastle: all I can say will never argue down a single button from his clothes. I have often wanted him to throw off his great flaxen wig, and where he was bald, to plaster it over like my Lord Pately, with powder.

Hastings.—You are right, madam; for, as among the ladies there are none ugly, so among the men there are none old.

Mrs. Hard.—But what do you think his answer was? Why, with his usual Gothic vivacity, he said I only wanted him to throw off his wig to convert it into a *tête* for my own wearing!

Hastings.—Intolerable! At your age you may wear what you please, and it must become you.

Mrs. Hard.—Pray, Mr. Hastings, what do you take to be the most fashionable age about town?

Hastings.—Some time ago forty was all the mode; but I'm told the ladies intend to bring up fifty for the ensuing winter.

Mrs. Hard.—Seriously. Then I shall be too young for the fashion!

Hastings.—No lady begins now to put on jewels till she's past forty. For instance, miss there, in a polite circle, would be considered as a child, as a mere maker of samplers.

Mrs. Hard.—And yet Mrs. Niece thinks herself as much a woman, and is as fond of jewels as the oldest of us all.

Hastings.—Your niece, is she? And that young gentleman, a brother of yours, I should presume?

Mrs. Hard.—My son, sir. They are contracted to each other. Observe their little sports. They fall in and out ten times a day, as if they were man and wife already. (To them.) Well, Tony, child, what soft things are you saying to your cousin Constance, this evening?

Tony.—I have been saying no soft things; but that it's very hard to be followed about so. Ecod! I've not a place in the house now that's left to myself but the stable.

Mrs. Hard.—Never mind him, Con, my dear. He's in another story behind your back.

Miss Neville.—There's something generous in my cousin's manner. He falls out before faces to be forgiven in private.

Tony.—That's a damned confounded——crack.

Mrs. Hard.—Ah! he's a sly one. Don't you think they're like each other about the mouth, Mr. Hastings? The Blenkinsop mouth to a T. They're of a size, too. Back to back, my pretties, that Mr. Hastings may see you. Come, Tony.

Tony.—You had as good not make me, I tell you. (Measuring.

Miss Neville.—O lud! he has almost cracked my head.

Mrs. Hard.—O, the monster! For shame, Tony. You a man, and behave so!

Tony.—If I'm a man, let me have my fortin. Ecod! I'll not be made a fool of no longer.

Mrs. Hard.—Is this, ungrateful boy, all that I'm to get for the pains I have taken in your education? I that have rocked you in your cradle, and fed that pretty mouth with a spoon! Did not I work that waistcoat to make you genteel? Did not I prescribe for you every day, and weep while the receipt was operating?

Tony.—Ecod! you had reason to weep, for you have been dosing me ever since I was born. I have gone through every receipt in the complete housewife ten times over; and you have thoughts of coursing me through Quincy next spring. But, ecod! I tell you, I'll not be made a fool of no longer.

Mrs. Hard.—Wasn't it all for your good, viper? Wasn't it all for your good?

Tony.—I wish you'd let me and my good alone, then. Snubbing this way when I'm in spirits. If I'm to have any good, let it come of itself; not to keep dinging it, dinging it into one so.

Mrs. Hard.—That's false; I never see you when you're in spirits. No, Tony, you then go to the alehouse or kennel. I'm never to be delighted with your agreeable, wild notes, unfeeling monster!

Tony.—Ecod! Mamma, your own notes are the wildest of the two.

Mrs. Hard—Was ever the like? But I see he wants to break my heart, I see he does.

Hastings.—Dear Madam, permit me to lecture the young gentleman a little. I'm certain I can persuade him to his duty.

Mrs. Hard.—Well! I must retire. Come, Constance, my love. You see, Mr. Hastings, the wretchedness of my situation. Was ever poor woman so plagued with a dear, sweet, pretty, provoking, undutiful boy.

(Exeunt Mrs. Hardcastle and Miss Neville.

HASTINGS, TONY

Tony (singing).—There was a young man riding by, and fain would have his will. Rang de didlo dee. Don't mind her. Let her cry. It's the comfort of her heart. I have seen her and sister cry over a book for an hour together, and they said, they liked the book better the more it made them cry.

Hastings.—Then you're no friend to the ladies, I find, my pretty young gentleman?

Tony.—That's as I find 'um.

Hastings.—Not to her of your mother's choosing, I dare answer! And yet she appears to me a pretty, well-tempered girl.

Tony.—That's because you don't know her as well as I. Ecod! I know every inch about her; and there's not a more bitter cantankerous toad in all Christendom!

Hastings (aside).—Pretty encouragement, this, for a lover.

Tony.—I have seen her since the height of that. She has as many tricks as a hare in a thicket, or a colt the first day's breaking.

Hastings.—To me she appears sensible and silent!

Tony.—Ay, before company. But when she's with her playmates she's as loud as a hog in a gate.

Hastings.—But there is a meek modesty about her that charms me.

Tony.—Yes, but curb her never so little, she kicks up, and you're flung in a ditch.

Hastings.—Well, but you must allow her a little beauty.—Yes, you must allow her some beauty.

Tony.—Bandbox! She's all a made up thing, mun. Ah! could you but see Bet Bouncer of these parts, you might then talk of beauty. Ecod, she has two eyes as black as sloes, and cheeks as broad and red as a pulpit cushion. She'd make two of she.

Hastings.—Well, what say you to a friend that would take this bitter bargain off your hands?

Tony.—Anon.

Hastings.—Would you thank him that would take Miss Neville, and leave you to happiness and your dear Betsy?

Tony.—Ay; but where is there such a friend, for who would take her?

Hastings.—I am he. If you but assist me, I'll engage to whip her off to France, and you shall never hear more of her.

Tony.—Assist you! Ecod, I will, to the last last drop of my blood. I'll clap a pair of horses to your chaise that shall trundle you off in a twinkling, and may be get you a part of her fortin besides, in jewels, that you little dream of.

Hastings.—My dear 'Squire, this looks like a lad of spirit.

Tony.—Come along then, and you shall see more of my spirit before you have done with me. (Singing.

We are the boys
That fears no noise
Where the thundering cannons roar.

(Exeunt.

END OF THE SECOND ACT

ACT III

Enter HARDCASTLE *solus*

Hard.—What could my old friend Sir Charles mean by recommending his son as the modestest young man in town? To me he appears the most impudent piece of brass that ever spoke with a tongue. He has taken possession of the easy chair by the fireside already. He took off his boots in the parlour, and desired me to see them taken care of. I'm desirous to know how his impudence affects my daughter.—She will certainly be shocked at it.

Enter Miss HARDCASTLE *plainly dressed*

Hard.—Well, my Kate, I see you have changed your dress as I bid you; and yet, I believe, there was no great occasion.

Miss Hard.—I find such a pleasure, sir, in obeying your commands, that I take care to observe them without ever debating their propriety.

Hard.—And yet, Kate, I sometimes give you some cause, particularly when I recommended my modest gentleman to you as a lover to-day.

Miss Hard.—You taught me to expect something extraordinary, and I find the original exceeds the description!

Hard.—I was never so surprised in my life! He has quite confounded all my faculties!

Miss Hard.—I never saw anything like it: And a man of the world, too!

Hard.—Ay, he learned it all abroad.—what a fool was I, to think

a young man could learn modestly by travelling. He might as soon learn wit at a masquerade.

Miss Hard.—It seems all natural to him.

Hard.—A good deal assisted by bad company and a French dancing-master.

Miss Hard.—Sure, you mistake, papa! a French dancing-master could never have taught him that timid look,—that awkward address,—that bashful manner——

Hard.—Whose look? whose manner? child!

Miss Hard.—Mr. Marlow's: his *mauvaise honte,* his timidity struck me at the first sight.

Hard.—Then your first sight deceived you; for I think him one of the most brazen first sights that ever astonished my senses!

Miss Hard.—Sure, sir, you rally! I never saw anyone so modest.

Hard.—And can you be serious! I never saw such a bouncing, swaggering puppy since I was born. Bully Dawson was but a fool to him.

Miss Hard.—Surprising! He met me with a respectful bow, a stammering voice, and a look fixed on the ground.

Hard.—He met me with a loud voice, a lordly air, and a familiarity that made my blood freeze again.

Miss Hard.—He treated me with diffidence and respect; censured the manners of the age; admired the prudence of girls that never laughed; tired me with apologies for being tiresome; then left the room with a bow, and, madam, I would not for the world detain you.

Hard.—He spoke to me as if he knew me all his life before. Asked twenty questions, and never waited for an answer. Interrupted my best remarks with some silly pun, and when I was in my best story of the Duke of Marlborough and Prince Eugene, he asked if I had not a good hand at making punch. Yes, Kate, he asked your father if he was a maker of punch!

Miss Hard.—One of us must certainly be mistaken.

Hard.—If he be what he has shown himself, I'm determined he shall never have my consent.

Miss Hard.—And if he be the sullen thing I take him, he shall never have mine.

Hard.—In one thing then we are agreed—to reject him.

Miss Hard.—Yes. But upon conditions. For if you should find him less impudent, and I more presuming; if you find him more respectful, and I more importunate—I don't know—the fellow is well enough for a man—Certainly we don't meet many such at a horse race in the country.

Hard.—If we should find him so—— But that's impossible. The first appearance has done my business. I'm seldom deceived in that.

Miss Hard.—And yet there may be many good qualities under that first appearance.

Hard.—Ay, when a girl finds a fellow's outside to her taste, she then sets about guessing the rest of his furniture. With her, a smooth face stands for good sense, and a genteel figure for every virtue.

Miss Hard.—I hope, sir, a conversation begun with a compliment to my good sense won't end with a sneer at my understanding?

Hard.—Pardon me, Kate. But if young Mr. Brazen can find the art of reconciling contradictions, he may please us both, perhaps.

Miss Hard.—And as one of us must be mistaken, what if we go to make further discoveries?

Hard.—Agreed. But depend on't I'm in the right.

Miss Hard.—And depend on't I'm not much in the wrong.

(Exeunt.

Enter TONY *running in with a casket*

Tony.—Ecod! I have got them. Here they are. My Cousin Con's necklaces, bobs and all. My mother shan't cheat the pool souls out of their fortin neither. O! my genus, is that you?

Enter HASTINGS

Hastings.—My dear friend, how have you managed with your mother? I hope you have amused her with pretending love for your cousin, and that you are willing to be reconciled at last? Our horses will be refreshed in a short time, and we shall soon be ready to set off.

Tony.—And here's something to bear your charges by the way. (Giving the casket.) Your sweetheart's jewels. Keep them, and hang those, I say, that would rob you of one of them!

Hastings.—But how have you procured them from your mother?

Tony.—Ask me no questions, and I'll tell you no fibs. I procured them by the rule of thumb. If I had not a key to every drawer in mother's bureau, how could I go to the alehouse so often as I do? An honest man may rob himself of his own at any time.

Hastings.—Thousands do it every day. But to be plain with you; Miss Neville is endeavouring to procure them from her aunt this very instant. If she succeeds, it will be the most delicate way at least of obtaining them.

Tony.—Well, keep them, till you know how it will be. But I know how it will be well enough, she'd as soon part with the only sound tooth in her head!

Hastings.—But I dread the effects of her resentment, when she finds she has lost them.

Tony.—Never you mind her resentment, leave me to manage that. I don't value her resentment the bounce of a cracker. Zounds! here they are! Morrice, Prance!

(Exit Hastings.

TONY, *Mrs.* HARDCASTLE, *Miss* NEVILLE

Mrs. Hard.—Indeed, Constance, you amaze me. Such a girl as you want jewels? It will be time enough for jewels, my dear, twenty years hence, when your beauty begins to want repairs.

Miss Neville.—But what will repair beauty at forty, will certainly improve it at twenty, madam.

Mrs. Hard.—Yours, my dear, can admit of none. That natural blush is beyond a thousand ornaments. Besides, child, jewels are quite out at present. Don't you see half the ladies of our acquaintance, my lady Killdaylight, and Mrs. Crump, and the rest of them, carry their jewels to town, and bring nothing but paste and marcasites back?

Miss Neville.—But who knows, madam, but somebody that shall be nameless would like me best with all my little finery about me?

Mrs. Hard.—Consult your glass, my dear, and then see, if with such a pair of eyes, you want any better sparklers. What do you think, Tony, my dear, does your counsin Con. want any jewels, in your eyes, to set off her beauty?

Tony.—That's as thereafter may be.

Miss Neville.—My dear aunt, if you knew how it would oblige me.

Mrs. Hard.—A parcel of old-fashioned rose and table-cut things. They would make you look like the court of king Solomon at a puppet-show. Besides, I believe I can't readily come at them. Then why don't you tell her so at once, as she's so longing for them. Tell her they're lost. It's the only way to quiet her. Say they're lost, and call me to bear witness.

Mrs. Hard. (apart to Tony).—You know, my dear, I'm only keeping them for you. So if I say they're gone, you'll bear me witness, will you? He! he! he!

Tony.—Never fear me. Ecod! I'll say I saw them taken out with my own eyes.

Miss Neville.—I desire them but a day, madam. Just to be permitted to show them as relics, and then they may be locked up again.

Mrs. Hard.—To be plain with you, my dear Constance, if I could find them, you should have them. They're missing, I assure you. Lost, for aught I know; but we must have patience wherever they are.

Miss Neville.—I'll not believe it; this it but a shallow pretence to deny me. I know they're too valuable to be so slightly kept, and as you are to answer for the loss.

Mrs. Hard—Don't be alarmed, Constance. If they be lost, I must restore an equivalent. But my son knows they are missing, and not to be found.

Tony.—That I can bear witness to. They are missing, and not to be found, I'll take my oath on't

Mrs. Hard.—You must learn resignation, my dear; for though we lose our fortune, yet we should not lose our patience. See me, how calm I am!

Miss Neville.—Ay, people are generally calm at the misfortunes of others.

Mrs. Hard.—Now, I wonder a girl of your good sense should waste a thought upon such trumpery. We shall soon find them; and, in the meantime, you shall make use of my garnets till your jewels be found.

Miss Neville.—I detest garnets!

Mrs. Hard.—The most becoming things in the world to set off a clear complexion. You have often seen how well they look upon me. You shall have them. (Exit.

Miss Neville.—I dislike them of all things. You shan't stir.—Was ever anything so provoking to mislay my own jewels, and force me to wear her trumpery.

Tony.—Don't be a fool. If she gives you the garnets, take what you can get. The jewels are your own already. I have stolen them out of her bureau, and she does not know it. Fly to your spark, he'll tell you more of the matter. Leave me to manage her.

Miss Neville.—My dear cousin!

Tony.—Vanish. She's here, and has missed them already. Zounds! how she fidgets and spits about like a Catherine wheel.

Enter Mrs. HARDCASTLE

Mrs. Hard.—Confusion! thieves! robbers! We are cheated, plundered, broke open, undone!

Tony.—What's the matter, what's the matter, mamma? I hope nothing has happened to any of the good family!

Mrs. Hard.—We are robbed. My bureau has been broke open, the jewels taken out, and I'm undone!

Tony.—Oh! is that all? Ha! ha! ha! By the laws, I never saw it better acted in my life. Ecod, I thought you was ruined in earnest, ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. Hard.—Why, boy I am ruined in earnest. My bureau has been broke open, and all taken away.

Tony.—Stick to that; ha, ha, ha! stick to that. I'll bear witness, you know, call me to bear witness.

Mrs. Hard.—I tell you, Tony, by all that's precious, the jewels are gone, and I shall be ruined for ever.

Tony.—Sure I know they're gone, and I am to say so.

Mrs. Hard.—My dearest Tony, but hear me. They're gone, I say.

Tony.—By the laws, mamma, you make me for to laugh, ha! ha! I know who took them well enough, ha! ha! ha!

Mrs. Hard.—Was there ever such a blockhead, that can't tell the difference between jest and earnest. I tell you I'm not in jest, booby!

Tony.—That's right, that's right: You must be in a bitter passion, and then nobody will suspect either of us. I'll bear witness that they are gone.

Mrs. Hard.—Was there ever such a cross-grained brute, that won't hear me! Can you bear witness that you're no better than a fool? Was ever poor woman so beset with fools on one hand, and thieves on the other?

Tony.—I can bear witness to that.

Mrs. Hard.—Bear witness again, you blockhead, you, and I'll turn you out of the room directly. My poor niece, what will become of her? Do you laugh, you unfeeling brute, as if you enjoyed my distress?

Tony.—I can bear witness to that.

Mrs. Hard.—Do you insult me, monster? I'll teach you to vex your mother, I will!

Tony.—I can bear witness to that.

(He runs off, she follows him.

Enter Miss HARDCASTLE *and* Maid

Miss Hard.—What an unaccountable creature is that brother of mine, to send them to the house as an inn, ha! ha! I don't wonder at his impudence.

Maid.—But what is more, madam, the young gentleman as you passed by in your present dress, asked me if you were the barmaid? He mistook you for the barmaid, madam!

Miss Hard.—Did he? Then as I live I'm resolved to keep up the delusion. Tell me, Pimple, how do you like my present dress? Don't you think I look something like Cherry in the Beaux Strategem?

Maid.—It's the dress, madam, that every lady wears in the country, but when she visits or receives company.

Miss Hard.—And are you sure he does not remember my face or person.

Maid.—Certain of it!

Miss Hard.—I vow, I thought so; for though we spoke for some

time together, yet his fears were such, that he never once looked up during the interview. Indeed, if he had, my bonnet would have kept him from seeing me.

Maid.—But what do you hope from keeping him in his mistake?

Miss Hard.—In the first place, I shall be seen, and that is no small advantage to a girl who brings her face to market. Then I shall perhaps make an acquaintance, and that's no small victory gained over one who never addresses any but the wildest of her sex. But my chief aim is to take my gentleman off his guard, and like an invisible champion of romance examine the giant's force before I offer to combat.

Maid.—But you are sure you can act your part, and disguise your voice, so that he may mistake that, as he has already mistaken your person?

Miss Hard.—Never fear me. I think I have got the true bar cant.—Did your honour call?——Attend the Lion there.——Pipes and tobacco for the Angel.—The Lamb has been outrageous this half hour!

Maid.—It will do, madam. But he's here.

(Exit Maid.

Enter MARLOW

Marlow.—What a bawling in every part of the house; I have scarce a moment's repose. If I go to the best room, there I find my host and his story. If I fly to the gallery, there we have my hostess with her courtesy down to the ground. I have at last got a moment to myself, and now for recollection. (Walks and muses.

Miss Hard.—Did you call, sir? did your honour call?

Marlow (musing).—As for Miss Hardcastle, she's too grave and sentimental for me.

Miss Hard.—Did your honour call?

(She still places herself before him, he turning away.

Marlow.—No, child! (Musing.) Besides from the glimpse I had of her, I think she squints.

Miss Hard.—I'm sure, sir, I heard the bell ring.

Marlow.—No! no! (Musing.) I have pleased my father, however, by coming down, and I'll to-morrow please myself by returning.

(Taking out his tablets, and perusing.

Miss Hard.—Perhaps the other gentleman called, sir?

Marlow.—I tell you, no.

Miss Hard.—I should be glad to know, sir. We have such a parcel of servants.

Marlowe.—No, no, I tell you. (Looks full in her face.) Yes, child, I think I did call. I wanted——I wanted——I vow, child, you are vastly handsome!

Miss Hard.—O la, sir, you'll make one ashamed.

Marlow.—Never saw a more sprightly malicious eye. Yes, yes, my dear, I did call. Have you got any of your—a—what d'ye in the house?

Miss Hard.—No, sir, we have been out of that these ten days.

Marlow.—One may call in this house, I find, to very little purpose. Suppose I should call for a taste, just by way of trial, of the nectar of your lips; perhaps I might be disappointed in that, too!

Miss Hard.—Nectar! nectar! that's a liquor there's no call for in these parts. French, I suppose. We keep no French wines here, sir.

Marlow.—Of true English growth, I assure you.

Miss Hard.—Then it's odd I should not know it. We brew all sorts of wines in this house, and I have lived here these eighteen years.

Marlow.—Eighteen years! Why one would think, child, you kept the bar before you were born. How old are you?

Miss Hard.—O! sir, I must not tell my age. They say women and music should never be dated.

Marlow.—To guess at this distance, you can't be much above forty. (Approaching.) Yet nearer I don't think women so much. (Approaching.) By coming close to some women they look younger still; but when we come very close indeed. (Attempting to kiss her.)

Miss Hard.—Pray, sir, keep your distance. One would think you wanted to know one's age as they do horses, by mark of mouth.

Marlow.—I protest, child, you use me extremely ill. If you keep me at this distance, how is it possible you and I can be ever acquainted?

Miss Hard.—And who wants to be acquainted with you? I want no such acquaintance, not I. I'm sure you did not treat Miss Hardcastle that was here awhile ago in this obstropalous manner. I'll warrant me, before her you looked dashed, and kept bowing to the ground, and talked, for all the world, as if you was before a justice of peace.

Marlow (aside).—Egad! she has hit it, sure enough. (To her.) In awe of her, child? Ha! ha! ha! A mere awkward, squinting thing, no, no! I find you don't know me. I laughed, and rallied her a little; but I was unwilling to be too severe. No, I could not be too severe, curse me!

Miss Hard.—O! then, sir, you are a favourite, I find, among the ladies?

Marlow.—Yes, my dear, a great favourite. And yet, hang me, I don't see what they find in me to follow. At the Ladies' Club in town I'm called their agreeable Rattle. Rattle, child, is not my real name, but one I'm known by. My name is Solomons. Mr. Solomons, my dear, at your service. (Offering to salute her.)

Miss Hard.—Hold, sir; you were introducing me to your club, not to yourself. And you're so great a favourite there you say?

Marlow.—Yes, my dear. There's Mrs. Mantrap, Lady Betty Blackleg, the Countess of Sligo, Mrs. Longhorns, old Miss Biddy Buckskin and your humble servant, keep up the spirit of the place.

Miss Hard.—Then it's a very merry place, I suppose.

Marlow.—Yes, as merry as cards, suppers, wine, and old women can make us.

Miss Hard.—And their agreeable Rattle, ha! ha! ha!

Marlow (aside).—Egad! I don't quite like this chit. She looks knowing, methinks. You laugh, child!

Miss Hard.—I can't but laugh to think what time they all have for minding their work or their family.

Marlow (aside).—All's well, she don't laugh at me. (To her.) Do you ever work, child?

Miss Hard.—Ay, sure. There's not a screen or a quilt in the whole house but what can bear witness to that.

Marlow.—Odso! Then you must show me your embroidery. I embroider and draw patterns myself a little. If you want a judge of your work you must apply to me. (Seizing her hand.

Miss Hard.—Ay, but the colours don't look well by candle light. You shall see all in the morning. (Struggling.

Marlow.—And why not now, my angel? Such beauty fires beyond the power of resistance.——Pshaw! the father here! My old luck: I never nicked seven that I did not throw ames-aces three times following.

(Exit Marlow.

Enter HARDCASTLE, *who stands in surprise*

Hard.—So, madam! So I find this is your modest lover. This is your humble admirer that kept his eyes fixed on the ground, and only adored at humble distance. Kate, Kate, art thou not ashamed to deceive your father so?

Miss Hard.—Never trust me, dear papa, but he's still the modest man I first took him for, you'll be convinced of it as well as I.

Hard.—By the hand of my body, I believe his impudence is infectious! Didn't I see him seize your hand? Didn't I see him haul you about like a milkmaid? and now you talk of his respect and his modesty, forsooth!

Miss Hard.—But if I shortly convince you of his modesty, that he has only the faults that will pass off with time, and the virtues that will improve with age, I hope you'll forgive him.

Hard.—The girl would actually make one run mad! I tell you I'll not be convinced. I am convinced. He has scarcely been three hours in the house, and he has already encroached on all my prerogatives.

You may like his impudence, and call it modesty. But my son-in-law, madam, must have very different qualifications.

Miss Hard.—Sir, I ask but this night to convince you.

Hard.—You shall not have half the time, for I have thoughts of turning him out this very hour.

Miss Hard.—Give me that hour then, and I hope to satisfy you.

Hard.—Well, an hour let it be then. But I'll have no trifling with your father. All fair and open, do you mind me?

Miss Hard.—I hope, sir, you have ever found that I considered your commands as my pride; for your kindness is such, that my duty as yet has been inclination.

(Exeunt.

END OF THE THIRD ACT

ACT IV

Enter HASTINGS *and Miss* NEVILLE

Hastings.—You surprise me! Sir Charles Marlow expected here this night? Where have you had your information?

Miss Neville.—You may depend upon it. I just saw his letter to Mr. Hardcastle, in which he tells him he intends setting out a few hours after his son.

Hastings.—Then, my Constance, all must be completed before he arrives. He knows me; and should he find me here, would discover my name, and perhaps my designs, to the rest of the family.

Miss Neville.—The jewels, I hope, are safe.

Hastings.—Yes, yes. I have sent them to Marlow, who keeps the keys of our baggage. In the meantime, I'll go to prepare matters for our elopement. I have had the Squire's promise of a fresh pair of horses; and, if I should not see him again, will write him further directions. (Exit.

Miss Neville.—Well! success attend you. In the meantime, I'll go amuse my aunt with the old pretence of a violent passion for my cousin. (Exit.

Enter MARLOW, *followed by a* Servant

Marlow.—I wonder what Hastings could mean by sending me so valuable a thing as a casket to keep for him, when he knows the only place I have is the seat of a post-coach at an Inn-door. Have you deposited the casket with the landlady, as I ordered you? Have you put it into her own hands?

Servant.—Yes, your honour.

Marlow.—She said she'd keep it safe, did she?

Servant.—Yes, she said she'd keep it safe enough; she asked me

how I came by it? and she said she had a great mind to make me give an account of myself. (Exit Servant.

Marlowe.—Ha! ha! ha! They're safe, however. What an unaccountable set of beings have we got amongst! This little barmaid though runs in my head most strangely, and drives out the absurdities of all the rest of the family. She's mine, she must be mine, or I'm greatly mistaken!

Enter HASTINGS

Hastings.—Bless me! I quite forgot to tell her that I intended to prepare at the bottom of the garden. Marlow here, and in spirits too!

Marlow.—Give me joy, George! Crown me, shadow me with laurels! Well, George, after all, we modest fellows don't want for success among the women.

Hastings.—Some women, you mean. But what success has your honour's modesty been crowned with now, that it grows so insolent upon us?

Marlow.—Didn't you see the tempting, brisk, lovely little thing that runs about the house with a bunch of keys to its girdle?

Hastings.—Well! and what then?

Marlow.—She's mine, you rogue, you. Such fire, such motion, such eyes, such lips——but egad! she would not let me kiss them though.

Hastings.—But are you sure, so very sure of her?

Marlow.—Why, man, she talked of showing me her work above-stairs, and I am to improve the pattern.

Hastings.—But how can you, Charles, go about to rob a woman of her honour?

Marlow.—Pshaw! pshaw! we all know the honour of the barmaid of an inn. I don't intend to rob her, take my word for it, there's nothing in this house, I shan't honestly pay for!

Hastings.—I believe the girl has virtue.

Marlow.—And if she has, I should be the last man in the world that would attempt to corrupt it.

Hastings.—You have taken care, I hope, of the casket I sent you to lock up? It's in safety?

Marlow.—Yes, yes. It's safe enough. I have taken care of it. But how could you think the seat of a post-coach at an Inn-door a place of safety? Ah! numbskull! I have taken better precautions for you than you did for yourself.——I have——

Hastings.—What!

Marlow.—I have sent it to the landlady to keep for you.

Hastings.—To the landlady!

Marlow.—The landlady.

Hastings.—You did!

Marlow.—I did. She's to be answerable for its forthcoming, you know.

Hastings.—Yes, she'll bring it forth with a witness.

Marlow.—Wasn't I right? I believe you'll allow that I acted prudently upon this occasion?

Hastings (aside).—He must not see my uneasiness.

Marlow.—You seem a little disconcerted, though, methinks. Sure nothing has happened?

Hastings.—No, nothing. Never was I in better spirits in all my life. And so you left it with the landlady, who, no doubt, very readily undertook the charge?

Marlow.—Rather too readily. For she not only kept the casket, but, through her great precaution, was going to keep the messenger too. Ha! ha! ha!

Hastings.—He! he! he! They're safe, however.

Marlow.—As a guinea in a miser's purse.

Hastings (aside).—So now all hopes of fortune are at an end, and we must set off without it. (To him.) Well, Charles, I'll leave you to your meditations on the pretty barmaid, and, he! he! he! may you be as successful for yourself as you have been for me. (Exit.

Marlow.—Thank ye, George! I ask no more. Ha! ha! ha!

Enter HARDCASTLE

Hard.—I no longer know my own house. It's turned all topsy-turvy. His servants have got drunk already. I'll bear it no longer, and yet, from my respect for his father, I'll be calm. (To him.) Mr. Marlow, your servant. I'm your very humble servant. (Bowing low.

Marlow.—Sir, your humble servant. (Aside.) What's to be the wonder now?

Hard.—I believe, sir, you must be sensible, sir, that no man alive ought to be more welcome than your father's son, sir. I hope you think so?

Marlow.—I do, from my soul, sir. I don't want much entreaty. I generally make my father's son welcome wherever he goes.

Hard.—I believe you do, from my soul, sir. But though I say nothing to your own conduct, that of your servants is insufferable. Their manner of drinking is setting a very bad example in this house, I assure you.

Marlow.—I protest, my very good sir, that's no fault of mine. If they don't drink as they ought they are to blame. I ordered them not to spare the cellar, I did, I assure you. (To the side scene.) Here, let one of my servants come up. (To him.) My positive directions were, that as I did not drink myself, they should make up for my deficiencies below.

Hard.—Then they had your orders for what they do! I'm satisfied!

Marlow.—They had, I assure you. You shall hear from one of themselves.

Enter Servant, *drunk*

Marlow.—You Jeremy! Come forward, sirrah! What were my orders? Were you not told to drink freely, and call for what you thought fit, for the good of the house?

Hard. (aside).—I begin to lose my patience.

Jeremy.—Please your honour, liberty and Fleet Street for ever! Though I'm but a servant, I'm as good as another man. I'll drink for no man before supper, sir, dammy! Good liquor will sit upon a good supper, but a good supper will not sit upon——hiccup——upon my conscience, sir.

Marlow.—You see, my old friend, the fellow is as drunk as he can possibly be. I don't know what you'd have more, unless you'd have the poor devil soused in a beer-barrel.

Hard.—Zounds! He'll drive me distracted if I contain myself any longer. Mr. Marlow. Sir; I have submitted to your insolence for more than four hours, and I see no likelihood of its coming to an end. I'm now resolved to be master here, sir, and I desire that you and your drunken pack may leave my house directly.

Marlow.—Leave your house!—Sure, you jest, my good friend! What, when I'm doing what I can to please you!

Hard.—I tell you, sir, you don't please me; so I desire you'll leave my house.

Marlow.—Sure, you cannot be serious! At this time of night, and such a night! You only mean to banter me!

Hard.—I tell you, sir, I'm serious; and, now that my passions are roused, I say this house is mine, sir; this house is mine, and I command you to leave it directly.

Marlowe.—Ha! ha! ha! A puddle in a storm. I shan't stir a step, I assure you. (In a serious tone.) This your house, fellow! It's my house. This is my house. Mine, while I choose to stay. What right have you to bid me leave this house, sir? I never met with such impudence, curse me, never in my whole life before!

Hard.—Nor I, confound me if ever I did! To come to my house, to call for what he likes, to turn me out of my own chair, to insult the family, to order his servants to get drunk, and then to tell me This house is mine, sir. By all that's impudent, it makes me laugh. Ha! ha! ha! Pray, sir, (Bantering.) as you take the house, what think you of taking the rest of the furniture? There's a pair of silver candlesticks, and there's a fire-screen, and here's a pair of brazen-nosed bellows, perhaps you may take a fancy to them?

Marlow.—Bring me your bill, sir, bring me your bill, and let's make no more words about it.

Hard.—There are a set of prints, too. What think you of the Rake's Progress for your own apartment?

Marlow.—Bring me your bill, I say; and I'll leave you and your infernal house directly.

Hard.—Then there's a mahogany table, that you may see your own face in.

Marlow.—My bill, I say.

Hard.—I had forgot the great chair, for your own particular slumbers, after a hearty meal.

Marlow.—Zounds! bring me my bill, I say, and let's hear no more on't.

Hard.—Young man, young man, from your father's letter to me, I was taught to expect a well-bred modest man, as a visitor here, but now I find him no better than a coxcomb and a bully; but he will be down here presently, and shall hear more of it. (Exit.

Marlow.—How's this! Sure, I have not mistaken the house? Everything looks like an inn. The servants cry "coming." The attendance is awkward; the barmaid, too, to attend us. But she's here, and will further inform me. Whither so fast, child? A word with you.

Enter Miss Hadcastle

Miss Hard.—Let it be short, then. I'm in a hurry.—(Aside.) I believe he begins to find out his mistake, but it's too soon quite to undeceive him.

Marlow.—Pray, child, answer me one question. What are you, and what may your business in this house be?

Miss Hard.—A relation of the family, sir.

Marlow.—What? A poor relation?

Miss Hard.—Yes, sir. A poor relation appointed to keep the keys, and to see that the guests want nothing in my power to give them.

Marlow—That is, you act as the barmaid of this inn.

Miss Hard.—Inn! O law!—What brought that in your head? One of the best families in the county keeps an inn! Ha, ha, ha, old Mr. Hardcastle's house an inn!

Marlow.—Mr. Hardcastle's house! Is this house Mr. Hardcastle's house, child?

Miss Hard.—Ay, sure. Whose else should it be.

Marlow.—So then all's out, and I have been damnably imposed on. O, confound my stupid head, I shall be laughed at over the whole town. I shall be stuck up in caricature in all the print-shops. The Dullissimo Macaroni. To mistake this house of all others for an inn, and my father's old friend for an innkeeper! What a swaggering

puppy must he take me for. What a silly puppy do I find myself. There again, may I be hanged, my dear, but I mistook you for the barmaid!

Miss Hard.—Dear me! dear me! I'm sure there's nothing in my behaviour to put me upon a level with one of that stamp.

Marlow.—Nothing, my dear, nothing. But I was in for a list of blunders, and could not help making you a subscriber. My stupidity saw everything the wrong way. I mistook your assiduity for assurance, and your simplicity for allurement. But it's over—this house I no more show my face in!

Miss Hard.—I hope, sir, I have done nothing to disoblige you. I'm sure I should be sorry to affront any gentleman who has been so polite, and said so many civil things to me. I'm sure I should be sorry (Pretending to cry.) if he left the family upon my account. I'm sure I should be sorry people said anything amiss, since I have no fortune but my character.

Marlow (aside).—By heaven, she weeps. This is the first mark of tenderness I ever had from a modest woman, and it touches me. (To her.) Excuse me, my lovely girl, you are the only part of the family I leave with reluctance. But to be plain with you, the difference of our birth, fortune and education, make an honourable connexion impossible; and I can never harbour a thought of seducing simplicity that trusted in my honour, or bringing ruin upon one whose only fault was being too lovely.

Miss Hard. (aside). Generous man! I now begin to admire him. (To him.) But I'm sure my family is as good as Miss Hardcastle's, and though I'm poor, that's no great misfortune to a contented mind, and, until this moment, I never thought that it was bad to want fortune.

Marlowe.—And why now, my pretty simplicity?

Miss Hard.—Because it puts me at a distance from one, that if I had a thousand pound I would give it all to.

Marlow (aside).—This simplicity bewitches me, so that if I stay I'm undone. I must make one bold effort, and leave her. (To her.) Your partiality in my favour, my dear, touches me most sensibly, and were I to live for myself alone, I could easily fix my choice. But I owe too much to the opinion of the world, too much to the authority of a father, so that—I can scarcely speak it—it affects me! Farewell! (Exit.

Miss Hard.—I never knew half his merit till now. He shall not go, if I have power or art to detain him. I'll still preserve the character in which I stooped to conquer, but will undeceive my papa, who, perhaps, may laugh him out of his resolution. (Exit.

Enter TONY, *Miss* NEVILLE

Tony.—Ay, you may steal for yourselves the next time. I have done my duty. She has got the jewels again, that's a sure thing; but she believes it was all a mistake of the servants.

Miss Neville.—But, my dear cousin, sure, you won't forsake us in this distress. If she in the least suspects that I am going off, I shall certainly be locked up, or sent to my aunt Pedigree's, which is ten times worse.

Tony.—To be sure, aunts of all kinds are damned bad things. But what can I do? I have got you a pair of horses that will fly like Whistlejacket, and I'm sure you can't say but I have courted you nicely before her face. Here she comes, we must court a bit or two more, for fear she should suspect us.

(They retire, and seem to fondle.

Enter Mrs. HARDCASTLE

Mrs. Hard.—Well, I was greatly fluttered, to be sure. But my son tells me it was all a mistake of the servants. I shan't be easy, however, till they are fairly married, and then let her keep her own fortune. But what do I see! Fondling together, as I'm alive! I never saw Tony so sprightly before. Ah! have I caught you, my pretty doves! What, billing, exchanging stolen glances, and broken murmurs! Ah!

Tony.—As for murmurs, mother, we grumble a little now and then, to be sure. But there's no love lost between us.

Mrs. Hard.—A mere sprinkling, Tony, upon the flame, only to make it burn brighter.

Miss Neville.—Cousin Tony promises to give us more of his company at home. Indeed, he shan't leave us any more. It won't leave us, cousin Tony, will it?

Tony.—O! it's a pretty creature. No, I'd sooner leave my horse in a pound, than leave you when you smile upon one so. Your laugh makes you so becoming.

Miss Neville.—Agreeable cousin! Who can help admiring that natural humour, that pleasant, broad, red, thoughtless, (Patting his cheek.) ah! it's a bold face.

Mrs. Hard.—Pretty innocence!

Tony.—I'm sure I always loved cousin Con's hazel eyes, and her pretty long fingers, like she twists this way and that, over the haspichollis like a parcel of bobbins.

Mrs. Hard.—Ah, he would charm the bird from the tree. I was never so happy before. My boy takes after his father, poor Mr. Lumpkin, exactly. The jewels, my dear Con, shall be your's incontinently. You shall have them. Isn't he a sweet boy, my dear? You

shall be married to-morrow, and we'll put off the rest of his education, like Dr. Drowsy's sermons, to a fitter opportunity.

Enter DIGGORY

Diggory.—Where's the 'Squire? I have got a letter for your worship.

Tony.—Give it to my mamma. She reads all my letters first.

Diggory.—I had orders to deliver it into your own hands.

Tony.—Who does it come from?

Diggory.—Your worship mun ask that of the letter itself.

Tony.—I could wish to know, though. (Turning the letter, and gazing on it.)

Miss Neville (aside).—Undone, undone! A letter to him from Hastings. I know the hand. If my aunt sees it we are ruined for ever. I'll keep her employed a little if I can. (To Mrs. Hardcastle.) But I have not told you, madam, of my cousin's smart answer just now to Mr. Marlow. We so laughed—you must know, madam—this way a little, for he must not hear us. (They confer.)

Tony (still gazing).—A damned cramp piece of penmanship, as ever I saw in my life. I can read your print-hand very well. But here there are such handles, and shanks, and dashes, that one can scarce tell the head from the tail. To Anthony Lumpkin, Esquire. It's very odd, I can read the outside of my letters, where my own name is, well enough. But when I come to open it, it's all—buzz. That's hard, very hard; for the inside of the letter is always the cream of the correspondence.

Mrs. Hard.—Ha! ha! ha! Very well, very well. And so my son was too hard for the philosopher!

Miss Neville.—Yes, madam; but you must hear the rest, madam. A little more this way, or he may hear us. You'll hear how he puzzled him again.

Mrs. Hard.—He seems strangely puzzled now himself, methinks.

Tony (still gazing).—A damned up and down hand, as if it was disguised in liquor. (Reading.) Dear Sir. Ay, that's that. Then there's an M, and a T, and an S, but whether the next be an izzard or an R, confound me, I cannot tell!

Mrs. Hard.—What's that, my dear? Can I give you any assistance?

Miss Neville.—Pray, aunt, let me read it. Nobody reads a cramp hand better than I. (Twitching the letter from her.) Do you know who it is from?

Tony.—Can't tell, except from Dick Ginger the feeder.

Miss Neville.—Ay, so it is. (Pretending to read.) Dear 'Squire. Hoping that you're in health, as I am at this present. The gentlemen of the Shakebag club has cut the gentlemen of Goose-green

quite out of feather. The odds—um—odd battle—um—long fighting —um, here, here, it's all about cocks, and fighting; it's of no consequence, here, put it up, put it up.

(Thrusting the crumpled letter upon him.

Tony.—But I tell you, miss, it's of all the consequence in the world! I would not lose the rest of it for a guinea! Here, mother, do you make it out? Of no consequence!

(Giving Mrs. Hardcastle the letter.

Mrs. Hard.—How's this! (Reads.) Dear 'Squire, I'm now waiting for Miss Neville, with a post-chaise and pair, at the bottom of the garden, but I find my horses yet unable to perform the journey. I expect you'll assist us with a pair of fresh horses, as you promised. Dispatch is necessary, as the hag (ay, the hag) your mother, will otherwise suspect us. Yours, Hastings. Grant me patience. I shall run distracted! My rage chokes me.

Miss Neville.—I hope, madam, you'll suspend your resentment for a few moments, and not impute to me any impertinence, or sinister design that belongs to another.

Mrs. Hard. (curtesying very low.)—Fine spoken, madam, you are most miraculously polite and engaging, and quite the very pink of courtesy and circumspection, madam. (Changing her tone.) And you, you great ill-fashioned oaf, with scarce sense enough to keep your mouth shut. Were you too joined against me? But I'll defeat all your plots in a moment. As for you, madam, since you have got a pair of fresh horses ready, it would be cruel to disappoint them. So, if you please, instead of running away with your spark, prepare, this very moment, to run off with me. Your old aunt Pedigree will keep you secure, I'll warrant me. You too, sir, may mount your horse, and guard us upon the way. Here, Thomas, Roger, Diggory, I'll show you that I wish you better than you do yourselves. (Exit.

Miss Neville.—So now I'm completely ruined.

Tony.—Ay, that's a sure thing.

Miss Neville.—What better could be expected from being connected with such a stupid fool, and after all the nods and signs I made him.

Tony.—By the laws, miss, it was your own cleverness, and not my stupidity, that did your business. You were so nice and so busy with your Shakebags and Goose-greens, that I thought you could never be making believe.

Enter HASTINGS

Hastings.—So, sir, I find by my servant, that you have shown my letter, and betrayed us. Was this well done, young gentleman?

Tony.—Here's another. Ask miss there who betrayed you. Ecod, it was her doing, not mine.

Enter MARLOW

Marlow.—So I have been finely used here among you. Rendered contemptible, driven into ill manners, despised, insulted, laughed at.

Tony.—Here's another. We shall have old Bedlam broke loose presently.

Miss Neville.—And there, sir, is the gentleman to whom we owe every obligation.

Marlow.—What can I say to him, a mere boy, an idiot, whose ignorance and age are a protection.

Hastings.—A poor contemptible booby, that would but disgrace correction.

Miss Neville.—Yet with cunning and malice enough to make himself merry with all our embarrassments.

Hastings.—An insensible cub.

Marlow.—Replete with tricks and mischief.

Tony.—Baw! damme, but I'll fight you both one after the other, ——with baskets.

Marlow.—As for him, he's below resentment. But your conduct, Mr. Hastings, requires an explanation. You knew of my mistakes, yet would not undeceive me.

Hastings.—Tortured as I am with my own disappointments, is this a time for explanations? It is not friendly, Mr. Marlow.

Marlow.—But, sir—

Miss Neville.—Mr. Marlow, we never kept on your mistake, till it was too late to undeceive you. Be pacified.

Enter Servant

Servant.—My mistress desires you'll get ready immediately, madam. The horses are putting to. Your hat and things are in the next room. We are to go thirty miles before morning.

(Exit Servant.

Miss Neville.—Well, well; I'll come presently.

Marlow (to Hastings).—Was it well done, sir, to assist in rendering me ridiculous? To hang me out for the scorn of all my acquaintance? Depend upon it, sir, I shall expect an explanation.

Hastings.—Was it well done, sir, if you're upon that subject, to deliver what I entrusted to yourself, to the care of another, sir?

Miss Neville.—Mr. Hastings. Mr. Marlow. Why will you increase my distress by this groundless dispute? I implore, I entreat you——

Enter Servant

Servant.—Your cloak, madam. My mistress is impatient.

Miss Neville.—I come. Pray be pacified. If I leave you thus, I shall die with apprehension!

Enter Servant

Servant.—Your fan, muff, and gloves, madam. The horses are waiting.

Miss Neville.—O, Mr. Marlow! if you knew what a scene of constraint and ill-nature lies before me, I'm sure it would convert your resentment into pity.

Marlow.—I'm so distracted with a variety of passions, that I don't know what I do. Forgive me, madam. George, forgive me. You know my hasty temper, and should not exasperate it.

Hastings.—The torture of my situation is my only excuse.

Miss Neville.—Well, my dear Hastings, if you have that esteem for me that I think, that I am sure you have, your constancy for three years will but increase the happiness of our future connection. If—

Mrs. Hard. (within).—Miss Neville. Constance, why, Constance, I say.

Miss Neville.—I'm coming. Well, constancy. Remember, constancy is the word. (Exit.

Hastings.—My heart! How can I support this! To be so near happiness, and such happiness!

Marlow (to Tony).—You see now, young gentleman, the effects of your folly. What might be amusement to you, is here disappointment, and even distress.

Tony (from a reverie).—Ecod, I have hit it. It's here. Your hands. Yours and yours, my poor Sulky. My boots there, ho! Meet me two hours hence at the bottom of the garden; and if you don't find Tony Lumpkin a more good-natur'd fellow than you thought for, I'll give you leave to take my best horse, and Bet Bouncer into the bargain! Come along. My boots, ho! (Exeunt.

END OF THE FOURTH ACT

ACT V

SCENE—*Continues*

Enter HASTING and Servant

Hastings.—You saw the old lady and Miss Neville drive off, you say?

Servant.—Yes, your honour. They went off in a post-coach, and the young 'Squire went on horseback. They're thirty miles off by this time.

Hastings.—Then all my hopes are over.

Servant.—Yes, sir. Old Sir Charles is arrived. He and the

old gentleman of the house have been laughing at Mr. Marlow's mistake this half hour. They are coming this way.

Hastings.—Then I must not be seen. So now to my fruitless appointment at the bottom of the garden. This is about the time.

(Exit.

Enter Sir CHARLES *and* HARDCASTLE

Hard.—Ha! ha! ha! The peremptory tone in which he sent for his sublime commands.

Sir Charles.—And the reserve with which I suppose he treated all your advances.

Hard.—And yet he might have seen something in me above a common innkeeper, too.

Sir Charles.—Yes, Dick, but he mistook you for an uncommon innkeeper, ha! ha! ha!

Hard.—Well, I'm in too good spirits to think of anything but joy. Yes, my dear friend, this union of our families will make our personal friendship hereditary: and though my daughter's fortune is but small——

Sir Charles.—Why, Dick, will you talk of fortune to me? My son is possessed of more than a competence already, and can want nothing but a good and virtuous girl to share his happiness and increase it. If they like each other, as you say they do——

Hard.—If, man! I tell you they do like each other. My daughter as good as told me so.

Sir Charles.—But girls are apt to flatter themselves, you know.

Hard.—I saw him grasp her hand in the warmest manner myself; and here he comes to put you out of your ifs, I warrant him.

Enter MARLOW

Marlow.—I come, sir, once more, to ask pardon for my strange conduct. I can scarce reflect on my insolence without confusion.

Hard.—Tut, boy, a trifle. You take it too gravely. An hour or two laughing with my daughter will set all to rights again. She'll never like you the worse for it.

Marlow.—Sir, I shall be always proud of her approbation.

Hard.—Approbation is but a cold word, Mr. Marlow; if I am not deceived, you have something more than approbation thereabouts. You take me.

Marlow.—Really, sir, I have not that happiness.

Hard.—Come, boy, I'm an old fellow, and know what's what, as well as you that are younger. I know what has past between you; but mum.

Marlow.—Sure, sir, nothing has past between us but the most profound resepect on my side, and the most distant reserve on hers.

You don't think, sir, that my impudence has been past upon all the rest of the family.

Hard.—Impudence! No, I don't say that—Not quite impudence—Though girls like to be played with, and rumpled a little too, sometimes. But she has told no tales, I assure you.

Marlow.—I never gave her the slightest cause.

Hard.—Well, well, I like modesty in its place well enough. But this is over-acting, young gentleman. You may be open. Your father and I will like you the better for it.

Marlow.—May I die, sir, if I ever——

Hard.—I tell you, she don't dislike you; and as I'm sure you like her——

Marlow.—Dear sir—I protest, sir——

Hard.—I see no reason why you should not be joined as fast as the parson can tie you.

Marlow.—But hear me, sir——

Hard.—Your father approves the match, I admire it, every moment's delay will be doing mischief, so——

Marlow.—But why don't you hear me? By all that's just and true, I never gave Miss Hardcastle the slightest mark of my attachment, or even the most distant hint to suspect me of affection. We had but one interview, and that was formal, modest and uninteresting.

Hard. (aside).—This fellow's formal modest impudence is beyond bearing.

Sir Charles.—And you never grasped her hand, or made any profications.

Marlow.—As heaven is my witness, I came down in obedience to your commands. I saw the lady without emotion, and parted without reluctance. I hope you'll exact no further proof of my duty, nor prevent me from leaving a house in which I suffer so many mortifications. (Exit.

Sir Charles.—I'm astonished at the air of sincerity with which he parted.

Hard.—And I'm astonished at the deliberate intrepidity of his assurance.

Sir Charles.—I dare pledge my life and honour upon his truth.

Hard.—Here comes my daughter, and I would stake my happiness upon her veracity.

Enter Miss HARDCASTLE

Hard.—Kate, come hither, child. Answer us sincerely, and without reserve; has Mr. Marlow made you any profession of love and affection?

Miss Hard.—The question is very abrupt, sir! But since you require unreserved sincerity, I think he has.

Hard. (to Sir Charles.)—You see.

Sir Charles.—And pray, madam, have you and my son had more than one interview?

Miss Hard.—Yes, sir, several.

Hard. (to Sir Charles.)—You see.

Sir Charles.—But did he profess any attachment?

Miss Hard.—A lasting one.

Sir Charles.—Did he talk of love?

Miss Hard.—Much, sir.

Sir Charles.—Amazing! And all this formally?

Miss Hard.—Formally.

Hard.—Now, my friend, I hope you are satisfied.

Sir Charles.—And how did he behave, madam?

Miss Hard.—As most professed admirers do. Said some civil things of my face, talked much of his want of merit, and the greatness of mine; mentioned his heart, gave a short tragedy speech, and ended with pretended rapture.

Sir Charles.—Now I'm perfectly convinced, indeed. I know his conversation among women to be modest and submissive. This forward, canting, ranting manner by no means describes him, and I am confident he never sat for the picture.

Miss Hard.—Then what, sir, if I should convince you to your face of my sincerity? If you and my papa, in about half-an-hour, will place yourselves behind that screen, you shall hear him declare his passion to me in person.

Sir Charles.—Agreed. And if I find him what you describe, all my happiness in him must have an end. (Exit.

Miss Hard.—And if you don't find him what I describe—I fear my happiness must never have a beginning.

SCENE—*Changes to the back of the Garden*

Enter HASTINGS

Hastings.—What an idiot am I, to wait here for a fellow, who probably takes a delight in mortifying me. He never intended to be punctual, and I'll wait no longer. What do I see? It is he, and perhaps with news of my Constance.

Enter TONY, *booted and spattered*

Hasting.—My honest 'Squire! I now find you a man of your word. This looks like friendship.

Tony.—Ay, I'm your friend, and the best friend you have in the

world, if you knew but all. This riding by night, by-the-bye, is cursedly tiresome. It has shook me worse than the basket of a stage-coach.

Hastings.—But how? Where did you leave your fellow-travellers? Are they in safety? Are they housed?

Tony.—Five and twenty miles in two hours and a half is no such bad driving. The poor beasts have smoked for it: Rabbit me, but I'd rather ride forty miles after a fox, than ten with such varmint.

Hastings.—Well, but where have you left the ladies? I die with impatience.

Tony.—Left them? Why, where should I leave them, but where I found them?

Hastings.—This is a riddle.

Tony.—Riddle me this, then. What's that goes round the house, and round the house, and never touches the house?

Hastings.—I'm still astray.

Tony.—Why, that's it mon. I have led them astray. By jingo, there's not a pond or slough within five miles of the place but they can tell the taste of.

Hastings.—Ha, ha, ha, I understand; you took them in a round, while they supposed themselves going forward. And so you have at last brought them home again.

Tony.—You shall hear. I first took them down Feather-bed-lane, where we stuck fast in the mud. I then rattled them crack over the stones of Up-and-down Hill—I then introduced them to the gibbet on Heavy-tree Heath, and from that, with a circumbendibus, I fairly lodged them in the horsepond at the bottom of the garden.

Hastings.—But no accident, I hope.

Tony.—No, no. Only mother is confoundedly frightened. She thinks herself forty miles off. She's sick of the journey, and the cattle can scarce crawl. So, if you own horses be ready, you may whip off with cousin, and I'll be bound that no soul here can budge a foot to follow you.

Hastings.—My dear friend, how can I be grateful?

Tony.—Ay, now it's dear friend, noble 'Squire. Just now, it was all idiot, cub, and run me through the guts. Damn your way of fighting, I say. After we take a knock in this part of the country, we kiss and be friends. But if you run me through the guts, then I should be dead, and you might go kiss the hangman.

Hastings.—The rebuke is just. But I must hasten to relieve Miss Neville; if you keep the old lady employed, I promise to take care of the young one. (Exit Hastings.

Tony.—Never fear me. Here she comes. Vanish. She's got from the pond, and draggled up to the waist like a mermaid.

Enter Mrs. HARDCASTLE

Mrs. Hard.—Oh, Tony, I'm killed. Shook. Battered to death. I shall never survive it. That last jolt that laid us against the quick-set hedge has done my business.

Tony.—Alack, mamma, it was all your own fault. You would be for running away by night, without knowing one inch of the way.

Mrs. Hard.—I wish we were at home again. I never met so many accidents in so short a journey. Drenched in the mud, overturned in a ditch, stuck fast in a slough, jolted to a jelly, and at last to lose our way! Whereabouts do you think we are, Tony?

Tony.—By my guess we should be upon Crackskull Common, about forty miles from home.

Mrs. Hard.—O lud! O lud! the most notorious spot in all the country. We only want a robbery to make a complete night on't.

Tony.—Don't be afraid, mamma, don't be afraid. Two of the five that kept here are hanged, and the other three may not find us. Don't be afraid. Is that a man that's galloping behind us? No; it's only a tree. Don't be afraid.

Mrs. Hard.—The fright will certainly kill me.

Tony.—Do you see anything like a black hat moving behind the thicket?

Mrs. Hard.—O death!

Tony.—No, it's only a cow. Don't be afraid, mamma, don't be afraid.

Mrs. Hard.—As I'm alive, Tony, I see a man coming towards us. Ah! I'm sure on't. If he perceives us, we are undone.

Tony (aside).—Father-in-law, by all that's unlucky, come to take one of his night walks. (To her.) Ah, it's a highwayman, with pistols as long as my arm. A damned ill-looking fellow.

Mrs. Hard.—Good heaven defend us! He approaches.

Tony.—Do you hide yourself in that thicket, and leave me to manage him. If there be any danger I'll cough and cry hem. When I cough be sure to keep close.

(Mrs. Hardcastle hides behind a tree in the back scene.

Enter HARDCASTLE

Hard.—I'm mistaken, or I heard voices of people in want of help. Oh, Tony, is that you? I did not expect you so soon back. Are your mother and her charge in safety?

Tony.—Very safe, sir, at my aunt Pedigree's. Hem.

Mrs. Hard. (from behind).—Ah! I find there's danger.

Hard.—Forty miles in three hours; sure, that's too much, my youngster.

Tony.—Stout horses and willing minds make short journeys, as they say. Hem.

Mrs. Hard. (from behind).—Sure he'll do the dear boy no harm.

Hard.—But I heard a voice here; I should be glad to know from whence it came.

Tony.—It was I, sir, talking to myself, sir. I was saying that forty miles in four hours was very good going. Hem. As to be sure it was. Hem. I have got a sort of cold by being out in the air. We'll go in if you please. Hem.

Hard.—But if you talked to yourself, you did not answer yourself. I am certain I heard two voices, and am resolved (Raising his voice.) to find the other out.

Mrs. Hard. (from behind.)—Oh! he's coming to find me out. Oh!

Tony.—What need you go, sir, if I tell you? Hem. I'll lay down my life for the truth—hem—I'll tell you all, sir. (Detaining him.

Hard.—I tell you I will not be detained. I insist on seeing. It's in vain to expect I'll believe you.

Mrs. Hard. (running forward from behind).—O lud, he'll murder my poor boy, my darling. Here, good gentleman, whet your rage upon me. Take my money, my life, but spare that young gentleman, spare my child, if you have any mercy.

Hard.—My wife! as I'm a Christian. From whence can she come, or what does she mean?

Mrs. Hard. (kneeling).—Take compassion on us, good Mr. Highwayman. Take our money, our watches, all we have, but spare our lives. We will never bring you to justice, indeed we wont, good Mr. Highwayman.

Hard.—I believe the woman's out of her senses. What, Dorothy, don't you know me?

Mrs. Hard.—Mr. Hardcastle, as I'm alive! My fears blinded me. But who, my dear, could have expected to meet you here, in this frightful place, so far from home. What has brought you to follow us?

Hard.—Sure, Dorothy, you have not lost your wits! So far from home, when you are within forty yards of your own door! (To him.) This is one of your old tricks, you graceless rogue, you! (To her.) Don't you know the gate, and the mulberry-tree; and don't you remember the horsepond, my dear?

Mrs. Hard.—Yes, I shall remember the horsepond as long as I live; I have caught my death in it. (To Tony.) And is it to you, you graceless varlet, I owe all this? I'll teach you to abuse your mother, I will.

Tony.—Ecod, mother, all the parish says you have spoiled me, and so you may take the fruits on't.

Mrs. Hard.—I'll spoil, I will.

(Follows him off the stage. (Exit.

Hard.—There's morality, however in his reply. (Exit.

Enter HASTINGS *and Miss* NEVILLE

Hastings.—My dear Constance, why will you deliberate thus? If we delay a moment, all is lost for ever. Pluck up a little resolution, and we shall soon be out of the reach of her malignity.

Miss Neville.—I find it impossible. My spirits are so sunk with the agitations I have suffered, that I am unable to face any new danger. Two or three years' patience will at last crown us with happiness.

Hastings.—Such a tedious delay is worse than inconstancy. Let us fly, my charmer. Let us date our happiness from this very moment. Perish fortune. Love and content will increase what we possess beyond a monarch's revenue. Let me prevail.

Miss Neville.—No, Mr. Hastings, no. Prudence once more comes to my relief, and I will obey its dictates. In the moment of passion, fortune may be despised, but it ever produces a lasting repentance. I'm resolved to apply to Mr. Hardcastle's compassion and justice for redress.

Hastings.—But though he had the will, he has not the power to relieve you.

Miss Neville.—But he has influence, and upon that I am resolved to rely.

Hastings.—I have no hopes. But since you persist, I must reluctantly obey you. (Exeunt.

SCENE—*Changes*

Enter Sir CHARLES *and Miss* HARDCASTLE

Sir Charles.—What a situation am I in! If what you say appears, I shall then find a guilty son. If what he says be true, I shall then lose one that, of all others, I most wished for a daughter.

Miss Hard.—I am proud of your approbation; and, to show I merit it, if you place yourself as I directed, you shall hear his explicit declaration. But he comes.

Sir Charles.—I'll to your father, and keep him to the appointment. (Exit Sir Charles.

Enter MARLOW

Marlow.—Though prepared for setting out, I come once more to take leave, nor did I, till this moment, know the pain I feel in the separation.

Miss Hard.— (in her own natural manner).—I believe these sufferings cannot be very great, sir, which you can so easily remove. A day or two longer, perhaps, might lessen your uneasiness, by showing the little value of what you think proper to regret.

Marlow (aside).—This girl every moment improves upon me. (To her.) It must not be, madam. I have already trifled too long

with my heart. My very pride begins to submit to my passion. The disparity of education and fortune, the anger of a parent, and the contempt of my equals, begin to lose their weight; and nothing can restore me to myself but this painful effort of resolution.

Miss Hard.—Then go, sir. I'll urge nothing more to detain you. Though my family be as good as hers you came down to visit, and my education, I hope, not inferior, what are these advantages without equal affluence? I must remain contented with the slight approbation of imputed merit; I must have only the mockery of your addresses, while all your serious aims are fixed on fortune.

Enter HARDCASTLE *and Sir* CHARLES *from behind*

Sir Charles.—Here, behind this screen.

Hard.—Ay, ay, make no noise. I'll engage my Kate covers him with confusion at last.

Marlow.—By heavens, madam, fortune was ever my smallest consideration. Your beauty at first caught my eye; for who could see that without emotion? But every moment that I converse with you, steals in some new grace, heightens the picture, and gives it stronger expression. What at first seemed rustic plainness, now appears refined simplicity. What seemed forward assurance, now strikes me as the result of courageous innocence, and conscious virtue.

Sir Charles.—What can it mean? He amazes me!

Hard.—I told you how it would be. Hush!

Marlow.—I am now determined to stay, madam, and I have too good an opinion of my father's discernment, when he sees you, to doubt his approbation.

Miss Hard.—No, Mr. Marlow, I will not, cannot detain you. Do you think I could suffer a connection, in which there is the smallest room for repentance? Do you think I would take the mean advantage of a transient passion, to load you with confusion? Do you think I could ever relish that happiness, which was acquired by lessening yours?

Marlow.—By all that's good, I can have no happiness but what's in your power to grant me. Nor shall I ever feel repentance, but in not having seen your merits before. I will stay, even contrary to your wishes; and though you should persist to shun me, I will make my respectful assiduities atone for the levity of my past conduct.

Miss Hard.—Sir, I must entreat you'll desist. As our acquaintance began, so let it end, in indifference. I might have given an hour or two to levity; but, seriously, Mr. Marlow, do you think I could ever submit to a connection, where I must appear mercenary, and you imprudent? Do you think I could ever catch at the confident addresses of a secure admirer?

Marlow (kneeling).—Does this look like security? Does this look like confidence? No, madam, every moment that shows me your merit, only serves to increase my diffidence and confusion. Here let me continue——

Sir Charles.—I can hold it no longer. Charles, Charles, how hast thou deceived me! Is this your indifference, your uninteresting conversation!

Hard.—Your cold contempt! your formal interview! What have you to say now?

Marlow.—That I'm all amazement! What can it mean?

Hard.—It means that you can say and unsay things at pleasure. That you can address a lady in private, and deny it in public; that you have one story for us, and another for my daughter!

Marlow.—Daughter!—this lady your daughter!

Hard.—Yes, sir, my only daughter. My Kate, whose else should she be?

Marlow.—Oh, the devil.

Miss Hard.—Yes, sir, that very identical tall squinting lady you were pleased to take me for. (Curtseying.) She that you addressed as the mild, modest, sentimental man of gravity, and the bold, forward, agreeable Rattle of the ladies' club: ha, ha, ha!

Marlow.—Zounds, there's no bearing this; it's worse than death!

Miss Hard.—In which of your characters, sir, will you give us leave to address you? As the faltering gentleman, with looks on the ground, that speaks just to be heard, and hates hypocrisy: or the loud confident creature, that keeps it up with Mrs. Mantrap, and old Miss Biddy Buckskin, till three in the morning; ha, ha, ha!

Marlow.—Oh, curse on my noisy head. I never attempted to be impudent yet, that I was not taken down. I must be gone.

Hard.—By the hand of my body, but you shall not. I see it was all a mistake, and I am rejoiced to find it. You shall not, sir, I tell you. I know she'll forgive you. Won't you forgive him, Kate? We'll all forgive you. Take courage, man.

(They retire, she tormenting him to the back scene.

Enter Mrs. HARDCASTLE, TONY

Mrs. Hard.—So, so they're gone off. Let them go, I care not.

Hard.—Who gone?

Mrs. Hard.—My dutiful niece and her gentleman, Mr. Hastings, from town. He who came down with our modest visitor, here.

Sir Charles.—Who, my honest George Hastings? As worthy a fellow as lives, and the girl could not have made a more prudent choice.

Hard.—Then, by the hand of my body, I'm proud of the connection.

Mrs. Hard.—Well, if he has taken away the lady, he has not taken her fortune, that remains in this family to console us for her loss.

Hard.—Sure, Dorothy, you would not be so mercenary?

Mrs. Hard.—Ay, that's my affair, not yours. But you know, if your son when of age, refuses to marry his cousin, her whole fortune is then at her own disposal.

Hard.—Ay, but he's not of age, and she has not thought proper to wait for his refusal.

Enter HASTINGS *and Miss* NEVILLE

Mrs. Hard. (aside).—What! returned so soon? I begin not to like it.

Hastings (To Hardcastle).—For my late attempt to fly off with your niece, let my present confusion be my punishment. We are now come back, to appeal from your justice to your humanity. By her father's consent, I first paid her my addresses, and our passions were first founded in duty.

Miss Neville.—Since his death, I have been obliged to stoop to dissimulation to avoid oppression. In an hour of levity, I was ready even to give up my fortune to secure my choice. But I'm now recovered from the delusion, and hope from your tenderness what is denied me from a nearer connection.

Mrs. Hard.—Pshaw, pshaw! this is all but the whining end of a modern novel.

Hard.—Be it what it will, I'm glad they're come back to reclaim their due. Come hither, Tony, boy. Do you refuse this lady's hand whom I now offer you?

Tony.—What signifies my refusing? You know I can't refuse her till I'm of age, father.

Hard.—While I thought concealing your age, boy, was likely to conduce to your improvement, I concurred with your mother's desire to keep it secret. But since I find she turns it to a wrong use, I must now declare, you have been of age these three months.

Tony.—Of age! Am I of age, father?

Hard.—Above three months.

Tony.—Then you'll see the first use I'll make of my liberty. (Taking Miss Neville's hand.) Witness all men by these presents, that I, Anthony Lumpkin, Esquire, of blank place, refuse you, Constantia Neville, spinster, of no place at all, for my true and lawful wife. So Constance Neville may marry whom she pleases, and Tony Lumpkin is his own man again!

Sir Charles.—O brave 'Squire!

Hastings.—My worthy friend!

Mrs. Hard.—My undutiful offspring!

Marlow.—Joy, my dear George, I give you joy sincerely. And could I prevail upon my little tyrant here to be less arbitrary, I should be the happiest man alive, if you would return me the favour.

Hastings (To Miss Hardcastle).—Come, madam, you are now driven to the very last scene of all your contrivances. I know you like him, I'm sure he loves you, and you must and shall have him.

Hard. (Joining their hands).—And I say so, too. And Mr. Marlow, if she makes as good a wife as she has a daughter, I don't believe you'll ever repent your bargain. So now to supper, to-morrow we shall gather all the poor of the parish about us, and the Mistakes of the Night shall be crowned with a merry morning; so boy, take her; as you have been mistaken in the mistress, my wish is, that you may never be mistaken in the wife.

EPILOGUE

BY DR. GOLDSMITH

Well, having stooped to conquer with success,
And gained a husband without aid from dress,
Still as a Barmaid, I could wish it too,
As I have conquered him to conquer you:
And let me say, for all your resolution,
That pretty Barmaids have done execution.
Our life is all a play, composed to please,
"We have our exits and our entrances."
The first act shows the simple country maid,
Harmless and young, of everything afraid;
Blushes when hired, and with unmeaning action,
I hopes as how to give you satisfaction.
Her second act displays a livelier scene,—
Th' unblushing Barmaid of a country inn.
Who whisks about the house, at market caters,
Talks loud, coquets the guests, and scolds the waiters.
Next the scene shifts to town, and there she soars,
The chop-house toast of ogling connoisseurs.
On 'Squires and Cits she there displays her arts,
And on the gridiron broils her lovers' hearts—
And as she smiles, her triumphs to complete,
Even Common Councilmen forget to eat.
The fourth act shows her wedded to the 'Squire,
And madam now begins to hold it higher;

Pretends to taste, at Operas cries *caro,*
And quits her *Nancy Dawson,* for *Che Faro.*
Doats upon dancing, and in all her pride,
Swims round the room, the *Heinel* of Cheapside:
Ogles and leers with artificial skill,
Till having lost in age the power to kill,
She sits all night at cards, and ogles at spadille,
Such, through our lives, the eventful history—
The fifth and last act still remains for me.
The Barmaid now for your protection prays,
Turns female Barrister, and pleads for Bayes.

EPILOGUE

To be spoken in the character of TONY LUMPKIN

BY J. CRADOCK ESQ.

WELL—now all's ended—and my comrades gone,
Pray what becomes of mother's nonly son?
A hopeful blade!—in town I'll fixe my station,
And try to make a bluster in the nation.
As for my counsin Neville, I renounce her,
Off—in a crack—I'll carry big Bet Bouncer.
Why should not I in the great world appear?
I soon shall have a thousand pounds a year;
No matter what a man may here inherit,
In London—'gad, they've some regard for spirit.
I see the horses prancing up the streets,
And big Bet Bouncer bobs to all she meets;
Then hoikes to jiggs and pastimes ev'ry night—
Not to the plays—they say it a'n't polite,
To Sadler's-Wells perhaps, or Operas go,
And once by chance, to the roratorio.
Thus here and there, for ever up and down,
We'll set the fashions too, to half the town;
And then at auctions—money ne'er regard,
Buy pictures like the great, ten pounds a yard:
Zounds, we shall make these London gentry say,
We know what's damned genteel, as well as they.